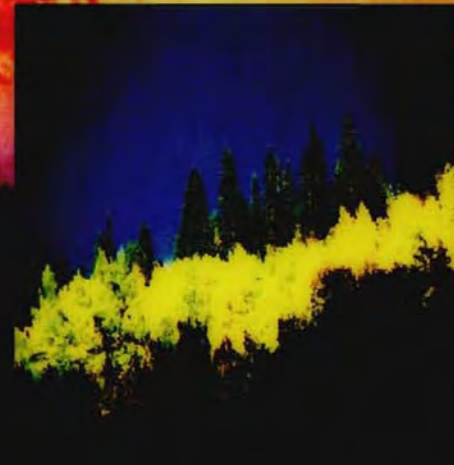
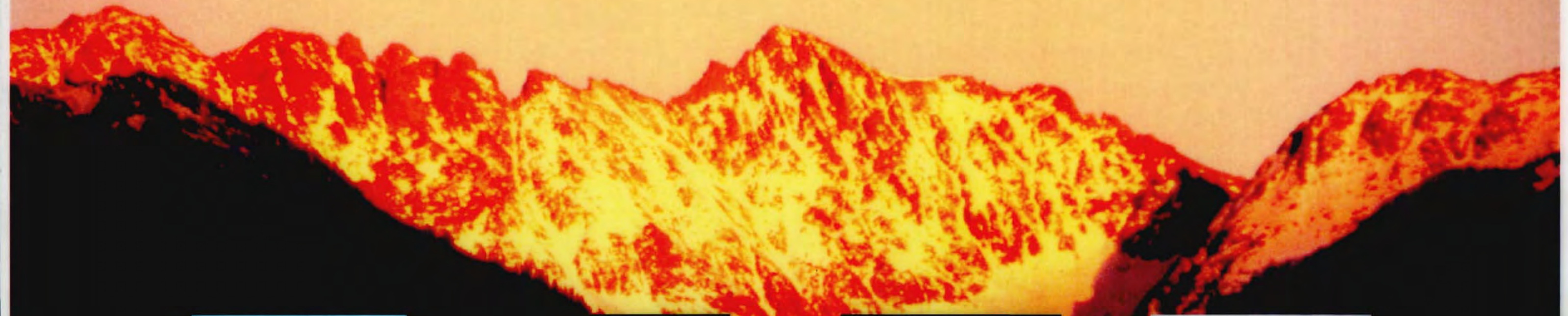


Town of Vail



Comprehensive Open Lands Plan

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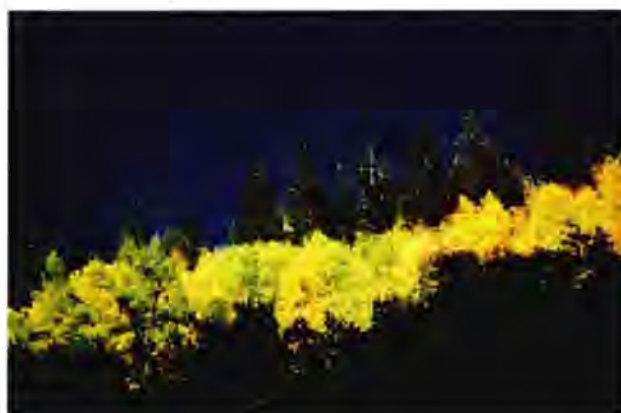
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The objectives of the Comprehensive Open Lands Plan are:

- To identify citizen and visitor needs and preferences for a comprehensive SYSTEM of open space uses such as parks, recreation, protection of environmental resources, trails, and reserve lands for public uses;
- To prioritize available open lands for acquisition or protection;
- To identify creative strategies to implement the acquisition and protection program; and
- To define a management system to appropriately manage Town-owned open space lands.
- To buffer neighborhoods with open space

An Open Lands Committee provided direction for the project and consisted of representatives from the Vail Town Council, Planning and Environmental Commission, U.S. Forest Service, Vail Associates, Vail Recreation District, Board of Realtors, and Town Staff.

The public involvement process consisted of four well-attended public meetings between August of 1993 and January of 1994. These meetings, along with a thorough review of all relevant planning and survey documents for the Town, resulted in a priority ranking of needs and uses for open space lands and recreational opportunities. This input led directly to the Comprehensive Open Lands Plan which identifies specific parcels and activities that should be pursued by the Town in order to realize the goals stated in both the public forum and previous community input on related plans.

The priorities for open space and recreation needs communicated by the citizens of Vail are, in order of priority:

1. Acquisition, preservation and protection of natural open space;
2. Improvement of the trail and bike path systems in and around the Town; and
3. Creation of additional recreation opportunities in a regional context including a swimming pool, athletic fields and a recreation center.

The concepts presented in this plan, developed as a result of this public input, describe connecting existing trail systems that are either incomplete or not interconnected, adding an extensive new trail system that essentially surrounds the Town and better interfaces with the National Forest System Lands and Vail Mountain, and protecting sensitive lands that are either along Gore Creek or part of the forest that extends into the Town. Extension of the streamwalk from the Village Core into Lionshead is desired by the community but objectionable to the adjacent property owners who fear loss of privacy and degraded views.

The Comprehensive Open Lands Plan is an action-oriented plan that identifies specific parcels of land that require some kind of action for either protection of sensitive lands, for trail easements and critical trail connections or for future public use, such as a West Vail fire station. Over 350 parcels were evaluated with fifty-one parcels of land on which actions are recommended. Recommended actions range from acquisition by the Town, trade with the U.S. Forest Service, acquiring trail easements, or purchasing development rights. In many cases, several options are available on a specific parcel, allowing flexibility in negotiations for both the landowner and the Town.

The objective has been to provide the Town with a menu of potential open space protection techniques at the least cost and management burden to the Town. For example, if an easement can be obtained from the landowner for a trail or to protect a site from development, generally this has been proposed as an alternative to outright acquisition. As a result, the land stays on the tax rolls and the Town is not responsible for general property management and maintenance. These "reduced rate" transactions can be beneficial for landowners since they can provide certain tax and estate planning benefits which meet a landowners financial objectives. A careful tailoring of transactions between landowners and the Town can produce mutually beneficial results.

Specific criteria were developed to evaluate these recommended actions in order to determine the areas of highest priority. Generally, actions received a high priority if they met the stated objectives of the Town and its' citizens and were an integral part of the open lands system. Within these fifty one parcels, there

are five priority areas made up of a number of recommended actions. These priority areas, shown on the Priority Plan in Exhibit 4 are (in order of priority):

1. Protect sensitive natural habitat areas, riparian areas, and hazard areas;
2. Extend the Vail Trail to East Vail and add several trailheads to access the trail;
3. Add a new trail on the north side and western half of Town to connect existing trailheads and neighborhoods;
4. Add three "trailheads" in the core areas to access Vail Mountain trails and inform visitors of trail opportunities and provide better access to Gore Creek;
5. Add bike lanes to the north and south frontage roads (the entire length of Town) and add paved shoulders to Vail Valley Drive.

For the past 13 years, the Town has had the use of tax funds generated from a Real Estate Transfer Tax (RETT) for the purchase of open lands and development and maintenance of parks and trails. This fund can and should now be better leveraged to take advantage of the opportunities of both GOCO ("Great Outdoors Colorado") and other State funding and mutually beneficial negotiations with property owners.

The Town should now enter into a new cooperative management system with the U.S. Forest Service and Vail Associates Inc. to provide outdoor recreation and open space preservation. With adoption of this plan, there will be added management and maintenance requirements for the Town. The maintenance fund from the RETT Tax will need to grow in response to these new management requirements. Additionally, open space protection must go beyond zoning to ensure long-term protection. Options for this longer term protection may include requiring a public vote to change uses on open space lands or the use of a land trust to hold conservation easements on lands.



INTRODUCTION

HOW THE DOCUMENT IS ORGANIZED

This document is a result of a comprehensive look at the Town of Vail and its citizens and visitor needs in terms of open space, parks, and recreation issues and public facility needs. The resulting Action Plan, which is described in detail in this document, includes specific recommendations for trails, trail-heads, open lands and protected parcels, and parcels intended for other community needs (such as an additional fire station).

The document first describes the identified needs of the Town, the overriding concept or framework for addressing these needs in a comprehensive manner, and then specific prioritized actions to meet these needs.

PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

The purpose of this plan is to identify and develop strategies for acquiring or protecting key remaining open lands in Vail that would be valuable for recreation, protecting sensitive environmental resources, extending or connecting trails, providing adequate neighborhood open space, and creating a small amount of contingency land for unforeseen needs (e.g. employee housing, public facilities). These "public needs" lands, while included in this Plan, would be purchased from sources other than the RETT fund.

This Plan pulls together a variety of activities that the Town has been working on. The Town is in the process of creating an inventory of its land; revising the zoning language for existing open land zones; working on a Land Ownership Adjustment Plan (LOA) with the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) to cooperatively develop a desired ownership pattern and readily identifiable common TOV and National Forest System boundary; developing an inventory of environmentally sensitive open lands with the cooperation of the Colorado Natural Heritage Program; and proposing zoning changes for public and private open land parcels. This plan is intended to integrate these efforts and provide a framework for decision making to identify, acquire, and manage open lands in the Town of Vail.

This Plan identifies existing open lands in and around Vail and determines the current need for obtaining land for recreation, conservation, trails and public use. The plan also identifies and analyzes specific parcels of land that can meet these needs. Options for acquisition or protection are also examined along with management strategies for these properties.

Acquisition can include outright purchase of property, purchase of easements or development rights, donations, condemnation, etc. Since resources are limited to obtain open lands, priorities have been established for recommended actions. These priorities are based on a number of criteria including demonstrated need, potential threat, opportunities with specific land owners, etc. Rough costs are included with the priority actions.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

In the early 1900's, miners began settling along the Gore Creek to mine silver, lead, and zinc around Battle Mountain. After the Great Depression sheep herders came to the valley. In the late 1930's, a state highway extended into the Gore Creek Valley under the direction of Highway Engineer Charlie Vail. During WWII, the 10th Mountain Division trained at Camp Hale, 20 miles south of the Gore Valley. After the war, two soldiers that had trained at Camp Hale, Pete Seibert and Earl Eaton, came back to establish a ski resort in Vail.

In 1959, a land use permit was issued to an investment group that had been formed for the Vail ski resort. The Vail resort opened on December 15, 1962 with 876 acres of skiable terrain making it the third largest ski resort in the United States. In 1966, the Town of Vail was incorporated and in 1969 Lionshead was annexed into the Town.

The Vail Town Council has placed a high priority on identifying and acquiring additional open space because of the rapid pace of development and the relatively limited number of vacant parcels. The general public has consistently said through surveys and public forums that preserving open space is a major priority for the community.

The Town began to develop a fund to protect open space when the Town of Vail implemented a 1% Real Estate Transfer Tax (RETT) in 1980. Funding for the Real Estate Transfer Tax is summarized in Table 1. Eight parks have been established with a portion of this revenue and include athletic fields, an outdoor amphitheater, ponds, play equipment, paths, and picnic facilities. In addition, a Park Superintendent was hired to ensure that these parks are well maintained.

	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1993
	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Budget	Actual
January	63,999	98,089	106,981	119,972	78,053	80,733	101,374	131,916	96,119	309,233	162,954	165,141	88,238	106,440	179,188
February	40,595	69,018	105,024	132,220	86,289	170,052	64,906	44,040	109,873	140,192	133,085	71,413	110,980	89,280	141,980
March	69,886	126,935	109,533	137,820	62,893	63,831	92,557	38,791	68,104	145,957	77,995	183,698	116,626	89,040	178,032
April	76,855	94,653	65,900	103,528	173,321	90,396	182,743	95,554	179,671	151,069	152,027	108,040	213,245	114,240	107,475
May	42,738	84,324	54,663	90,599	96,006	228,673	98,651	120,984	99,736	220,299	167,972	96,994	142,817	105,360	189,742
June	62,239	125,433	54,488	140,638	76,467	49,513	79,915	73,509	101,364	122,466	136,364	141,863	138,852	90,720	112,847
July	49,367	186,110	104,262	88,539	157,598	88,523	70,441	47,949	126,537	125,675	75,189	132,042	95,373	93,000	168,959
Subtotal	405,679	784,562	600,851	793,314	730,427	771,726	690,587	552,743	781,404	1,214,891	905,566	899,191	906,111	688,080	1,078,203
August	79,859	115,499	71,282	97,806	58,937	32,860	100,182	61,137	109,315	86,347	77,486	99,820	91,695	78,480	145,035
September	59,800	113,992	49,332	96,746	64,671	48,516	108,167	78,819	116,557	143,306	75,745	85,645	132,330	79,080	195,685
October	108,510	154,000	42,498	122,546	88,732	109,633	93,860	124,291	177,380	241,393	118,986	258,974	179,094	124,800	180,475
November	102,623	107,788	81,698	91,385	105,109	74,909	89,047	114,839	241,888	165,964	102,210	268,394	240,933	112,080	176,174
December	142,662	133,867	110,911	56,533	81,890	333,139	106,695	95,495	192,947	192,737	107,880	95,742	441,833	117,480	202,004
TOTAL	899,133	1,409,689	956,572	1,258,330	1,129,786	1,370,783	1,188,538	1,027,324	1,619,471	2,044,638	1,287,873	1,707,786	1,991,966	1,208,080	1,977,576

Table 1
Real Estate Transfer Tax History and Budget



CURRENT TRENDS

There are a number of trends that will have an effect on the future of the Vail Valley, specifically related to recreation and open space. Vail is largely a developed island within the White River National Forest and will increasingly depend on the surrounding public lands to provide a variety of recreational opportunities. Relevant trends that are outlined briefly in the Northwest Colorado Council of Governments white paper on environmental trends effecting Vail include:

- Increase in the number of commuters into Vail as more workers are moving down valley
- Shift in population base down valley due to rising property values
- Increase in number of second home properties within the Town
- An aging population
- More active use and increased recreational demand on National Forest System lands (down hill skiing, biking, hunting, hiking, etc).
- Increase in environmental awareness and concern for environmental quality and protection

Another trend effecting the recommendations in the Plan is the popularity of hiking, biking, skating, etc., on linear recreation systems (trails, bikeways, greenways) as opposed to recreating solely in developed parks. This national trend is evidenced in the Vail Valley through the strong support of new connections in the trail system and the level of use on the current system. Vail is positioned to take advantage of this new focus by improving and extending the existing trail system, as discussed further as part of the recommendations of the plan.

INVENTORY

OPEN AND UNDEVELOPED LANDS

An inventory of open lands within the Town of Vail was completed in June of 1993. This inventory is displayed on the Existing Open Lands Map (See Exhibit 1) which shows lands currently zoned open space and vacant lands not yet developed. Maps provided by the Vail Valley Consolidated Water District (VVCWD) were useful in describing the number and location of developable parcels still available in the Town of Vail. This information was then updated using building permit records.

The 1986 Town of Vail Land Use Plan indicated that 12% of the land within the Town of Vail was subdivided and undeveloped and 23% was unplatted and undeveloped, resulting in a total of 35%, or 1,179 acres not developed. Parks and zoned open space accounted for another 17%, (or 555 acres) of land.

Since 1986, zoned open space has increased to 952 acres and the acres of undeveloped buildable lots has significantly decreased. Projections from VVCWD indicate that Vail is 90% built out and that approximately 950 more dwelling units could be developed. This includes additional guest accommodations, multi-family units, duplexes, and single family units. As of October 1993, there are approximately 270 undeveloped, buildable lots remaining in the Town of Vail.

LAND ZONED OPEN SPACE

There are two open space zone districts in Vail; Agricultural and Open Space (AOS) and Greenbelt and Natural Open Space (GNOS). There are approximately 651 acres of AOS zoned land (Table 2). The primary function of the AOS district is to provide

open space for recreation and agriculture. However, this district does allow for a wide variety of uses (e.g., churches, schools, single family dwellings) that are not compatible with an open lands zone district. In addition, agriculture is no longer a viable land use in Vail.

The Greenbelt and Natural Open Space (GNOS) District consists of 326 acres and is the most restrictive open space zone district. Development in GNOS areas is essentially prohibited except for pedestrian and bicycle paths and golf courses as a conditional use.

The Town of Vail owns a significant amount of the zoned open lands within the Town: 62% of GNOS and 75% of AOS lands (Table 2 - Ownership of Zoned Open Lands in Vail). Most of the privately owned lands zoned GNOS and AOS are on very steep slopes or have other environmental constraints (e.g., hazard area, floodplain, wetland).

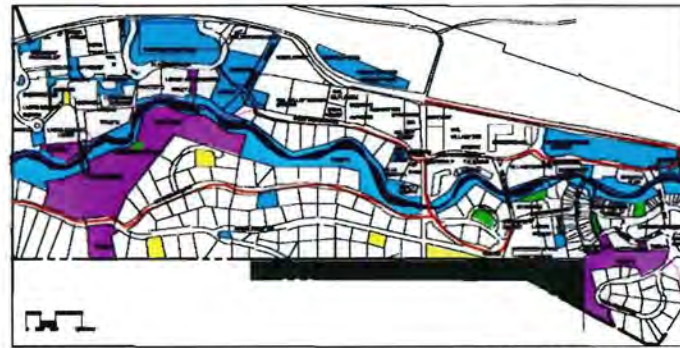
At the time the plan was adopted the Town was working on the first of a two phase project to change open lands zoning in Vail. Phase One involved changing the zoning language in the GNOS and AOS zone districts. These changes reflect recommendations from the 1991 Development Code Revision Report and additional changes that the Planning and Environmental Commission and TOV staff have identified. Phase Two of this project involved making zoning changes to specific parcels of land.

The TOV staff has proposed changes to the names, purpose statements, allowed uses, and conditional uses for both the AOS and GNOS districts. The proposed changes are designed to create a pure "Natural

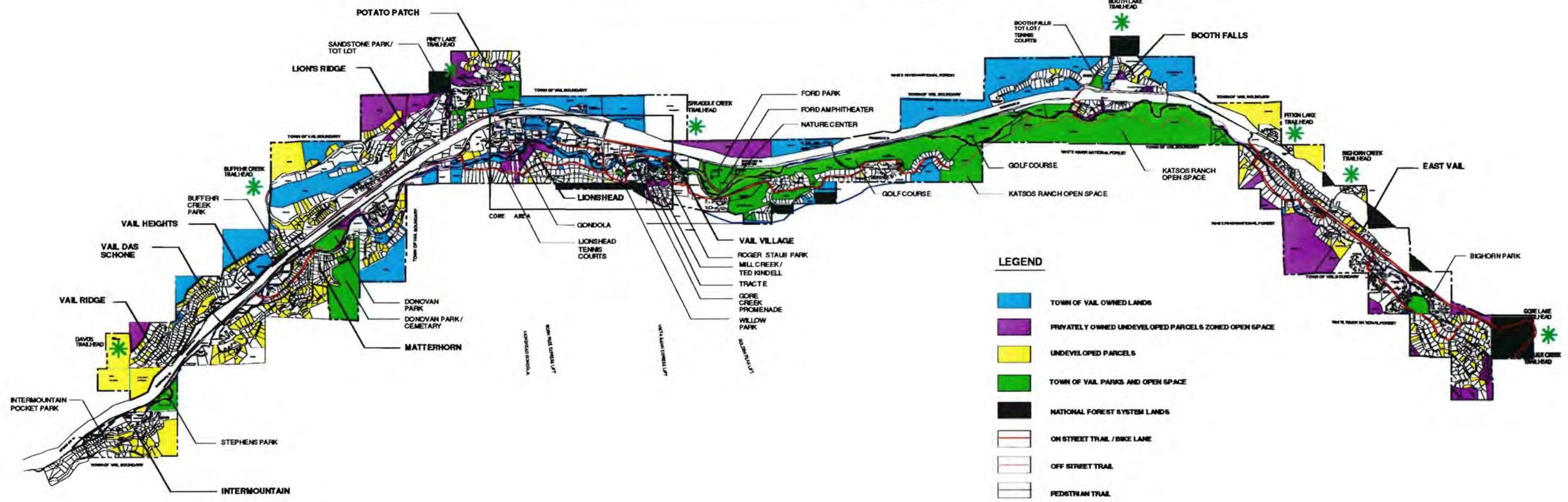
Greenbelt	Number of Parcels	Acres
Town of Vail	8	210
Vail Associates	0	0.00
US Forest Service	5	71.87
Corporation	6	40.83
Individuals	0	0.00
Colo. Dept. of Transportation	2	4.07
Total	21	326.77

Ag. & Open Space	Number of Parcels	Acres
Town of Vail	36	501.70
Vail Associates	17	57.17
US Forest Service	0	0
Corporation	16	39.4
Individuals	10	53.2
Colo. Dept. of Transportation	0	0
Total	79	651.47

Table 2
Ownership of Zoned Open Lands in Vail



CORE AREA ENLARGEMENT



- LEGEND**
- TOWN OF VAIL OWNED LANDS
 - PRIVATELY OWNED UNDEVELOPED PARCELS ZONED OPEN SPACE
 - UNDEVELOPED PARCELS
 - TOWN OF VAIL PARKS AND OPEN SPACE
 - NATIONAL FOREST SYSTEM LANDS
 - ON STREET TRAIL / BIKE LANE
 - OFF STREET TRAIL
 - PEDESTRIAN TRAIL

Exhibit 1
Existing Open Lands

Town of Vail



PARKS	Area	PARK FACILITIES																					
		Play Equipment	Open Grass Fields	Play Fields	Trails/Walkways	Tennis Courts/Volleyball Ct.	Benches	Restrooms	Picnic Tables	Shelters	Parking	Ponds	Nature Center	Amphitheater	Alpine Garden	Nordic Ski	Ice Skating	Golf	Fishing	Bike Path Connection	Pedestrian Path Connection	Adjacent to Creek	Adjacent to Mountain Base
Bighorn Park	7.3 ac	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Booth Creek Park	3.0 ac	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Bullehr Park	.9 ac	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Donovan Park	54.0 ac	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Ford Park	36.4 ac	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Golden Peak	2.5 ac	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Gore Creek Promenade	.3 ac	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Intermtn. Pocket Park	.2 ac	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Katsos Ranch	172.0 ac	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Lionshead Tot Lot	.4 ac	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Mayor's Park	.2 ac	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Mill Creek/Ted Kendall	.3 ac	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Rogar Staub Park	.2 ac	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Sandstone Park	17.7 ac	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Shepherd's Park	13.8 ac	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Pirate Ship Park	3.7 ac	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Willow Park	.4 ac	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Golf Course	96 ac	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Total	409.4																						

Table 3
Park Facilities

Area Preservation" District (NAP) and a "Recreational Open Space" (ROS) District. Changes are recommended to the permitted and conditional uses in these districts to ensure consistency with their purpose statements. At the time of this report, the proposed zoning changes were being reviewed by the Town of Vail Planning and Environmental Commission.

Work has begun on Phase Two which involves making zoning changes to specific parcels. Site visits have been made to all AOS, GNOS and PUD (Public Use) zoned parcels and specific recommendations have been made for classifying each parcel. Further action to change parcel zoning will occur after changes in the zoning language have been approved.

OUTDOOR RECREATION INVENTORY

An inventory was completed in June of 1993 of the current TOV parks. This survey included a review of recognized parks, open spaces, pedestrian

and bike trails, and National Forest System trailheads. The inventory includes park size, type of play equipment, number of trails and walkways through the site, open fields, immediate surroundings, and proximity to other recreation areas, as well as a number of other features.

In the Town of Vail there are approximately 313 acres of designated parks, not including the Town of Vail public golf course. The Vail Recreation District and the Eagle Valley School District offer a broad range of programs, services and facilities, many of which take place on these park lands. Other public areas which are not considered formal parks but provide usable open space include: the Nature Center which provides interpretive nature trails and presentations; the Vail Library which has stream access and well used open space; and the publicly

owned portions of the Gore Creek stream tract which provides access to Gore Creek for fisherman and other recreational activities.

As a resort community, Vail also has many private recreational facilities including tennis courts, swimming pools and fitness centers. Although many of these facilities are primarily for visitor use, they are often open to the general public. Public recreation facilities in other communities in the Valley, such as Eagle-Vail, Avon, Minturn and Edwards, are also available to Vail residents.

Seventeen parks within the Town were inventoried in detail(See Table 3.). This inventory indicates that seven of the parks are open green spaces in an otherwise developed area, ten have at least one facility (i.e. a picnic table, tennis court), ten are next to a recognized bike path, seven have playground equipment, and seven are within a short walking distance of the Village area. Two of these parks (Pirate Ship Park

and the Lionshead Tot Lot) are on land owned by Vail Associates.

Vail is surrounded by the White River National Forest, which provides opportunities for hiking, horseback riding, and mountain biking directly accessible from the Town. White River National Forest is approximately 1.9 million acres with over 891,493 acres of protected wilderness areas. In addition, Vail Mountain located to the south of Town on NFS property, provides over 3,800 skiable acres in the winter and a network of hiking and cycling trails in the summer.

TRAILS INVENTORY

Vail completed a Recreation Trails Master Plan in 1988 that identified trail users and their needs, and included deficiencies with the current trails system. A major recommendation in this plan was to obtain additional lands to interconnect existing trails and to create new trails. Eighteen existing trails were inventoried for their trail length, what the trail connects, type of trail, surfacing, description of signs, and general condition (See Table 4).

Not included in this survey is the Vail Pass recreation trail. This is a paved trail, primarily used for cycling that extends from East Vail over Vail Pass and down to Frisco and Breckenridge. Eagle County has recently completed a bicycle master plan which suggests extending a cycling trail from Vail to the west to

Name of Trail	Trail Connects	Approx. Length	Comments	Type of Trail						
				Asphalt	Gravel	Dirt	On Street	Off Street	Blue Line	
Frontage Road South	Conoco station to Main Gore Creek Dr.	.2 miles		•						
North Frontage Road	Sideway parking lot to Red Sandstone Elementary School	1.7 miles	From just west of the post office until just east of Bullehr Creek Park, the trail becomes a blue line adjacent to the street.	•						
Main Bike Path	Donovan Park to Library	2.8 miles		•						
South Frontage Rd.	Rec. path connection @ South Frontage to West Lionshead Ct.	.3 miles	The path changes from a blue line on road (West) to a rec. trail (East) at Forest Road	•						
Old Highway @Bighorn Rd.	East end of Bighorn Rd. and beginning of the Vail Pass bike path	.6 miles	Follows old Highway 6 - very little vehicular traffic.	•						
Forest Road	South Frontage to Rec. Plan Trail	.2 miles		•						
Dobson Arena	Dobson and West Meadow Drive	.250'	Exclusively blue and red traffic except for occasional buses. There is a conflict between pedestrians, rollerbladers, and buses.	•						
West Meadow Drive	Rec. plan path and Vail Road	.25 miles	Although not signed, this is a major route for all types of traffic.	•						
Frontage Road South	4-way stop at Frontage and Vail Road to Vail Valley Drive	.3 miles		•						
Downtown Pedestrian Areas	N/A	N/A	Need to determine feasibility of lighting on streamwalk between Westin and Lionshead.	•						
Gore Creek Streamwalk	Ford Park to Covered Bridge & Library to Westin	2.5 miles		•						
Main Ford Park Trail	Tennis Center/Parking lot to Covered Bridge	.9	There is a short side trail up to Vail Valley Dr. - paved; approx. .2 miles; This short trail also leads to nature trails at southern side of park.	•						
Vail Valley Drive - Sunburst Drive	East Vail parking structure to W. end of Katsos Ranch Trail	.2 miles	Needs paved shoulder for biking to reduce congestion and conflict between cyclists, pedestrians, and cars.	•						
Vail Trail	Gold Peak tennis area to golf clubhouse	.5 miles	This trail is a wonderful natural trail that was created for local runners.	•						
Aspen Lane - Aspen Court	Frontage Road and Katsos Ranch Trail	.2 miles		•						
Katsos Ranch Trail	East Vail interchange to Sunburst Drive at Bridge Street	2.2 miles	Winter activities include sleigh rides and x-country skiing	•						
Bighorn Rd.	East Vail interchange to Main Gore Drive	1.9 miles	Beginning of trail at W. end is gravel for about 1/10 mile then becomes paved. E. end is connected to Main Gore	•						
Main Gore Drive - Juniper Lane - Streamside Circle East	Both ends are on Bighorn Drive	1.3 miles	Dr-part of the rec. plan trails. W. end connects to Bridge St-the beginning of the Katsos Ranch Trail.	•						
		16 miles								

Table 4
Existing Trail Facilities



V.A. Hiking Trails		V.A. Biking Trails		NFS Trails	
Name	Length	Name	Length	Name	Length
Berry Picker	4.6 miles	Upper Fireweed	1.2 miles	Two Elk Trail	11 miles
Gore Range Loop	1.1 miles	Lightning Lookout	1.2 miles r.l.	Pitkin Creek Trail	5 miles
Ridge Route	2.8 miles	Village Trail	6 miles	Bighorn Trail	3.6 miles
Kinnickinnick	2 miles	Blackjack Loop	2.4 miles r.l.	Booth Creek Trail	6 miles
Lower Fireweed	1 mile	Kloser's Klimb	2.4 miles	Deluge Creek Trail	4 miles
Ptarmigan Loop	1.2 miles	Lion Down	5.5 miles	Vail Pass Trail (biking/hiking)	30 miles
Sunlight	1.5 miles	Grand Traverse	9 miles	Buffehr Creek Trail	2.5 miles
Eagle View	4 miles	World Cup Race Course	11 miles	Spraddle Creek Trail	3.5 miles
				Davos Trail	2.5 miles
TOTAL	18.2 miles	TOTAL	38.7 miles	TOTAL	68.1 miles

Table 5
Existing V.A. and NFS Trails

connect with the Glenwood Canyon recreation trail. A major hurdle to this plan has been creating a trail through Dowd Junction. In 1992, the Town secured partial funding from the Colorado Department of Transportation and using budgeted funds, the Town of Vail proposes to build a trail through Dowd Junction and across the Eagle River to connect to Highway 6&24 west of the Minturn interchange. Both V.A. and the U.S.F.S. provide an extensive network of trails (Table 5). Together, there are 122 miles of trails provided by V.A. and the U.S.F.S. that are accessible from Vail. Vail Associates is in the process of preparing a mountain bike master plan for Vail Mountain.

ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE LAND

Town staff initially identified 50 vacant parcels throughout Vail that have significant environmental constraints for development. These constraints range from snow avalanche, rock fall, or debris flow hazards to floodplain and wetland conditions. Forty eight of these parcels are zoned Greenbelt Natural Open Space or Agricultural Open Space.

The Town has prepared hazard maps which indicate these conditions on aerial photographs. In addition, riparian areas and sensitive natural habitat have been identified and mapped. Both riparian areas and sensitive natural habitat were identified in the summer of 1993 by biologists working for Colorado State University and the Colorado Natural Heritage Program.

The Colorado Natural Heritage Program used infrared aerial photographs and field surveys to identify sensitive natural areas that have national, regional or local significance. These areas have been combined with the hazard maps, resulting in a composite Hazards and Sensitive Areas Map (Exhibit 2).

The Colorado Natural Heritage Program is a non-regulatory, technical support organization affiliated with the Nature Conservancy. In addition to conducting biological surveys it provides a national database of endangered and threatened species which all Federal land management agencies rely on.

NEEDS ASSESSMENT AND PUBLIC INPUT PROCESS

PRIORITIES FOR RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE

Several public and Open Lands Committee meetings were held in order to assess current recreation and open space needs and trends in Vail. In addition to these public meetings, an analysis was conducted that studied past planning documents and surveys and their recommendations for recreation and open space. Both the public meetings for the plan and an analysis of previous plans (Table 6) have indicated that the priorities are to:

1. *Preserve open space*
2. *Improve the pedestrian and bike system*
3. *Provide additional recreation facilities*

PRESERVE OPEN SPACE

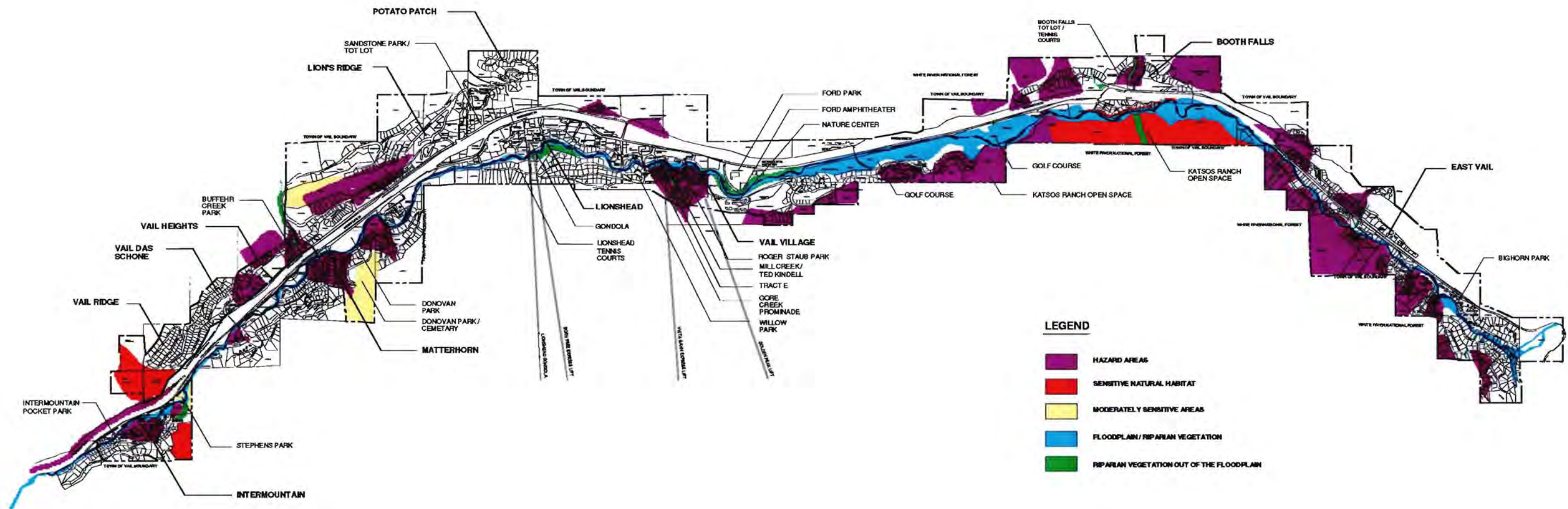
There was strong public consensus that the number one priority for open space acquisition is to protect natural open space and preserve the "mountain experience". People felt that acquiring or protecting natural open space was critical in maintaining the natural character of the Vail Valley. The public felt that protecting the natural open character of the area was more important than developing active outdoor recreational opportunities and was needed to protect water quality and natural habitat. Over half of the top 20 priorities from the first public meeting relate directly to the issue of protecting natural open space

IMPROVE PEDESTRIAN AND BIKE SYSTEM

The second priority includes improving the pedestrian and bike path system. Several previous plans and studies concluded that there is a need to improve and extend the pedestrian path system in order to access and connect green spaces throughout the core area. This has resulted in the Streetscape Master Plan, Vail Village Master Plan, and Master Transportation Plan which are in the process of being implemented.

Encouraging stream access by creating a continuous stream walk along Gore Creek and connecting it with the existing parks, open space and pedestrian path

HAZARD AND SENSITIVE AREA MAP
Comprehensive Open Lands Plan
 TOWN OF VAIL VAIL, COLORADO



SOURCE OF DATA: Town of Vail Hazard Maps
 Colorado Natural Heritage Program
 CSU Riparian Mapping

Exhibit 2
 Hazards and Sensitive Areas Map



PROVIDE ADDITIONAL RECREATION FACILITIES

There was concern voiced that open space and recreational opportunities are less available at either end of Town (particularly in West Vail North of I-70) and that improvements should be investigated. This lack of facilities is supported by an analysis of the National Recreation and Park Standards. While an overall analysis shows that the Town of Vail far exceeds national standards, there are some access deficiencies in the system due to Vail's linearity and Interstate 70 splitting the valley. The recommended solution is to improve, complete, and extend the bike and pedestrian trail system. Additionally, West Vail, on the north side of the Interstate, could utilize an additional small "pocket park" to meet this need. In East Vail, the Water Tank site could provide an additional picnic area in the S.E. corner of Town as well as a new summer/fall trailhead.

The third priority also includes supporting recreational activities on a regional scale, including a swimming pool, recreation center, and additional athletic fields. Many of these items could be accommodated at the Berry Creek property in Edwards, at the new softball complex in Eagle, and at the proposed recreation center in Avon.

U.S. FOREST SERVICE, VAIL ASSOCIATES, AND VAIL RECREATION DISTRICT INTERESTS

Specific discussions with the U.S. Forest Service, Vail Associates and the Vail Recreation District support the general concepts of this plan. The U.S. Forest Service is interested in reducing recreational impacts on the trails that lead into the Eagles Nest Wilderness Area on the north side of Town, which can be accomplished by improving the trail system and trailhead parking in and around the Town. This would include improved bike access to the existing trailheads with bike parking and other improvements made to the trailheads. No new trails in or near the Wilderness Area are favored by the U.S. Forest Service. The U.S. Forest Service is also concerned that public access to National Forest System lands continue at existing trailhead locations. There are

several right-of-way issues that need to be addressed to guarantee continued public access. Vail Associates is also interested in an improved trail system and making better connections between the Town and Vail Mountain by improving both trails and signs.

PUBLIC FACILITIES/ LAND RESERVE

One of the objectives of the Comprehensive Open Lands planning process is to identify, to the extent possible, future public needs (or needs not currently being met) that will require land. The 1986 Vail Land Use Plan discusses this issue in detail. The intent here is to update that work and make recommendations for specific parcels of land that may be desired for public use. As previously mentioned, funding for land reserve parcels acquired for public use would not come from RETT funds. In order to update information regarding community needs, interviews were conducted with representatives from the Town of Vail Public Works Department, Community Development, Fire Department, Police Department, Eagle Valley Schools, the Vail Housing Authority, and the Upper Eagle Valley Consolidated Water and Sanitation District.

The following issues and needs resulted from these interviews:

1. **Vail Public Works Department**
The Public Works Department will need to expand their current facility located on the north side of Interstate 70. Currently, the Vail Associates' owned parcel of land immediately west of their existing facility is leased as a snow storage area and is the logical place for expansion. Additionally, a West Vail snow plow and cinder storage site has long been on their needs list.
2. **Vail Fire Department**
Over 10 years ago, the Vail Fire Department identified a need for a West Vail Fire Station. Response times from their main facility in the Village to West Vail are inadequate and continued growth has only exacerbated this problem. Because this is a health/ safety issue, finding an acceptable site has received a high priority in the development of recommendations for the Public Facilities/ Land

Reserve portion of the Comprehensive Open Lands Plan.

3. **Vail Police Department**
The Police Department is in the process of expanding their current facility. The only need they have that is not covered in this expansion is an outdoor shooting range for recertification of officers and for "maneuvers" practice. However, this need may be accommodated at a proposed shooting range in Wolcott.
4. **Eagle Valley School District**
The only Eagle Valley School facility in the Town of Vail is the Red Sandstone School. The District envisions utilizing this facility for the foreseeable future. They would like more play areas near the school but realize that the topography is very constraining.
5. **Upper Eagle Valley Consolidated Water and Sanitation District**
The Sanitation District's needs mainly involve easements through several properties for either additional water tanks or new diversion structures. These needs have been discussed in this Plan. The District intends to construct a new intake and diversion system upstream from the runaway truck ramp on Interstate 70 to ensure a clean water supply. Although, the Town does not need to take any direct action, it does need to be aware of these needs and work with the District to develop a utility easement.
6. **Vail Housing Authority/Community Development Department**
The Vail Housing Authority is interested in "employee" housing projects on the Mountain Bell Site and at Vail Commons. The Housing Authority believes that any higher density project, if located within the Town, should be in close proximity to either the core area or the West Vail commercial area or have good transportation access.



CONCEPT PLAN

The Concept Plan provides the framework from which specific actions are recommended in the Comprehensive Open Lands Plan. The Concept Plan describes in general terms key protection areas, key activity areas, and critical connections between them. The recurring theme of preservation of natural open space and trail connections is diagrammed in a conceptual format (*Exhibit 3*).

ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE LANDS

The National Forest System lands surrounding the Town (both forested and open) are a significant amenity for the Town as a recreational, environmental, and visual resource. Portions of the natural systems extend into Town, shown in green stripes on the diagram and are important to protect. In many cases, these lands contain steep slopes or have high hazard potential, such as for snow avalanches and rockfalls. These lands should not be developed.

The Gore Creek Corridor is the other significant natural resource enjoyed by the Town. Running through the middle of Town, Gore Creek is an important wildlife corridor, riparian and wetland resource, and recreation amenity. Protection of the Creek is extremely important as well as allowing public access to the stream corridor.

ACTIVITY CENTERS AND CONNECTIONS

The other component to the diagram describes a series of "activity centers" shown as asterisks and connections indicated by different types of lines. These centers are activity areas where people are likely to gather or choose as a destination. Included in these centers are retail areas such as the Vail Village Core, Lionshead, and the West Vail commercial areas; bus stops; and parks and open spaces such as Katsos Ranch, Ford Park, Pirate Ship Park, and Bighorn Park. The connections then tie all of these centers together through a series of bicycle and pedestrian trails that strive to separate uses wherever possible and provide a high quality recreation and travel experience. Activity areas could include interpretive/informational centers, sitting areas, or even play equipment.

The linking together of activity centers through the hierarchy of trails provides residents and visitors with multiple non-vehicular options for reaching destinations, for recreation, enjoyment of the natural environment or commuting purposes. These connections include bike lanes on the frontage road, an improved bike path system, walking paths adjacent to the bike path, stream access, and a new south and north trail system that almost entirely encircles the Town.

ACTION PLAN

The Action Plan is intended to be a framework for obtaining or protecting open lands as well as creating trail linkages in a logical and comprehensive manner. Parcels included in the plan were selected because they serve to meet the overall needs and vision for protecting or acquiring open lands, as well as lands for public use, trails and parks. The plan illustrates the intended use for each "Action Parcel" including public facility (e.g. fire station), open space (including trails), or park. It also illustrates the lands that will either be acquired from or traded to the U.S. Forest Service as part of the Land Ownership Adjustment Plan (LOA) (described in more detail in *Appendix 1*).

In conjunction with the Action Plan, a series of Tables describe the potential protection techniques, management system and open space or public objective for each parcel (*see Tables 8 and 9*).

PROTECTION TECHNIQUES

There are a variety of techniques available to protect land. These techniques vary in both cost and result. Techniques have been recommended for each action parcel. A description of these techniques follows:

TOV Acquire-Fee

The traditional method of land acquisition is to acquire the full fee interest at fair market value. The property could be acquired through a cash purchase or over time according to a term or installment purchase. If a public entity acquires land with terms, it can pay interest, which is tax exempt, and thereby lower the purchase price of the property. In addition, there are many ways to structure a term or install-

ment purchase which meet landowner estate or tax objectives, which can extend the term of purchase. This capability to flexibly structure a fee acquisition can meet the Town's objectives of creatively leveraging its limited resources. It can also meet the landowners financial and tax planning objectives, resulting in effectively lowering land costs to the TOV. The acquisition of the full fee interest by the TOV will remove the land from the tax rolls and require that the TOV provide for the upkeep, maintenance and security of the property.

TOV Acquire - Tax Lien

For those properties where owners are delinquent in paying property taxes the Town has the option of acquiring the tax certificates of paying the back taxes to acquire the property. In most instances, the acquisition of property by acquiring the tax certificate results in substantial savings over the price previous owners have paid for the property. In Vail, most of these properties are steep or inaccessible (with limited development capability) which has limited the owners ability to develop or sell. This is a very cost effective way for the Town to acquire property and ensure that it is not built upon at a later date.

U.S. Forest Service Acquire - Fee

According to the Land Ownership Adjustment (LOA) Plan developed by the Town and the U.S. Forest Service, a number of properties will change hands in order to create the common boundary both desire. The U.S. Forest Service will acquire the fee to these lands generally through a land trade since acquisition dollars are scarce.

Land Trade

In order for the Town and the U.S. Forest Service to develop the common boundary defined by the LOA plan, they will need to trade a number of properties. Land trades are voluntarily entered into and can be made when properties appraised at or near the same value are traded between jurisdictions. While land trades are a desirable way to change ownerships, they generally take from two to five years to conclude and may involve a number of complicated appraisal issues.

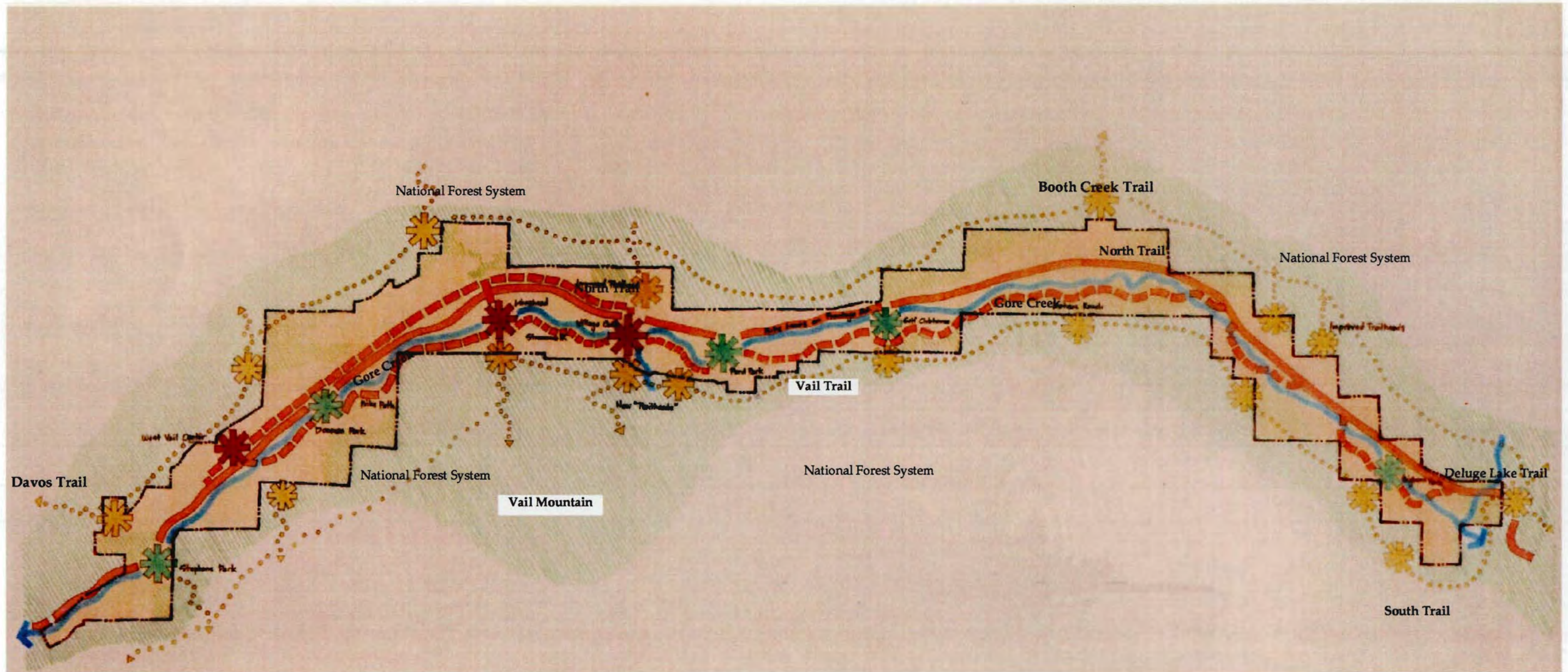


Exhibit 3
Concept Plan



Obtain Development Rights

Land consists of a "bundle" of rights which the owner acquires when a property is purchased. For instance, water and mineral rights allow the owner to use those water and mineral resources attached to the land and identified in a property's deed. The value of development rights is based on the right to develop a certain number of units on a property established by a combination of zoning and market conditions. Protection of a property can be accomplished by acquiring all or a portion of the development rights while the landowner retains the open land or those development rights specified to remain with the land. The value of the development rights is determined by an appraisal which values the land in two ways. First the land is appraised at its fair market value and second, it is appraised with the development rights removed. The value of the development rights is the difference between the fair market value and the "restricted" value.

The Town can either purchase the development rights or if the owner is willing, acquire them by gift with the landowner obtaining the tax benefits of a charitable donation. These tax benefits relate to income and estate taxes and may well influence property taxes. The donation of development rights can be made to either the Town or to a qualified nonprofit land trust such as the Nature Conservancy or Colorado Open Lands. The benefit of the development rights transfer is that it is a flexible instrument which can be tailored to the desires of the landowner and the Town. The benefit to the Town of acquiring the development rights is that they cost less than full fee acquisition and also that the land stays on the tax rolls and continues to be managed by the landowner. A conservation easement is another term which is often applied to the acquisition or donation of development rights. The conservation easement is a legal restriction on a property which is designed to protect certain natural and scenic qualities of the land, while at the same time allowing the property owner to retain ownership and voting rights in a homeowners association.

Easements

As used in this plan, easements generally refer to an agreement for use of a property for certain uses which the land owner either donates or sells to the Town. For example, a trail easement is an agreement to permit the Town to utilize a certain width (right-of-way) for the construction of a pedestrian or bike

trail. The Town would also assume the responsibility for maintenance, safety, and liability. The value of the easement is determined by an appraisal of the property with and without the easement, much as the valuation of development rights is determined.

Public Use Agreement

As used in this plan, a public use agreement is a contract negotiated between the Town and the property owner in lieu of obtaining easements to allow public access. A public use agreement would involve a contract that would enable the Town to make improvements to private property (i.e. a trail). This agreement could allow the private property owner to relocate improvements, at the owners expense, to a mutually agreeable location on the property. Maintenance of any facilities would be negotiated as a part of the agreement.

Donation

The Town can obtain land or development rights through donation. The benefit to the landowner may be that the donation of a highly appreciated property to the Town can create significant tax benefits for the landowner. These benefits relate to income and estate taxes primarily. Many communities and land trusts acquire land and development rights through gifts which are structured to provide landowners with tax benefits.

Bargain Sale

A bargain sale is a combination gift and sale of land or development rights. The bargain sale works when a landowner is charitably inclined, but cannot afford to make a contribution of the entire value of a property. In this case, the landowner may sell the property to the Town at less than fair market value, say 50% of the value, and gift the remaining 50% of value to the Town. As a result, the landowner receives the benefit of the cash sale plus the charitable donation of the balance of the value. Bargain sales can be advantageous where the landowner is charitably inclined and where there are tax or estate issues which make the transaction favorable.

Condemnation

Condemnation can be utilized by government when a landowner refuses to sell a parcel of property to a government which needs the land to meet established public objectives, such as the creation of a road, park, or transit line. The governmental entity must pay the landowner fair market value for the

property which is determined by an appraisal process. Condemnation or the threat of condemnation can provide a landowner with certain tax benefits which a normal real estate transaction would not enjoy. Condemnation is used only in very limited circumstances when a landowner is unwilling to negotiate.

PRIORITIES FOR ACTION

Evaluation criteria used to prioritize actions toward achieving the goals outlined in the Comprehensive Open Lands Plan were derived from input from the public, the Open Lands Steering Committee, previous planning studies and analysis, interviews with the U.S. Forest Service, the Water and Sanitation District, Fire, Public Works, and Police Departments and Vail Associates.

A two-tiered evaluation process was conducted that looked first at whether the action/ parcel meets the needs of the Town, its' citizens, visitors, and achieves the goals of the plan. The second level criteria include the availability of the land or the pressures for development of the parcel of land. Lands intended for future public use were also prioritized in terms of public need and health and safety issues, but are separated from the natural and recreation systems because RETT funds will not be used for land reserve acquisitions.

The **Level One Evaluation** (Meeting Needs) looked at four areas of community need relating to the natural resource system, the recreation system, trails system, and reserving lands for future civic/public uses.

Natural Resource Areas (All parcels meeting these criteria are a high priority)

- Riparian areas
- Sensitive natural areas
- Hazard areas

Recreation/ Parks

- Potential/ need for pocket park/ nature area
- Recreational opportunity for East and West Vail
- Recreational opportunity for community



Trails

- Interconnection with VA and USFS trails
- Separation of trail uses (bikes, pedestrians, etc)
- Alleviate pressure on wilderness area
- Complete critical connections on existing system

Civic/ Public Use

- Public health/ safety
- Meet key public objective

Level Two Evaluation - (Availability)

- Threat of development or irreversible damage
- Opportunities to leverage other funds
- Cost
- Unusual opportunity with motivated seller
- Opportunity for trade with U.S.F.S.
- Low Management requirements on Town
- Low Liability to Town

ACTION	PARCELS	Priority
Natural System	1, 6, 29- 32, 36, 38, 40-47,51	1
South Trail	23-25, 38, 41, 42, 44-47, 51	2
North Trail	1, 2, 3, 4, 15, 26	3
Stream Access	20, 21, 22, Chapel	4
Bike Lane	9,10	5

Table 7
Priority Actions

Table 7 summarizes how the major concepts and their associated parcels met the above stated criteria. Each open lands parcel was evaluated against both the level 1 and 2 criteria. It is important to note that a systems approach was used to evaluate and rank actions. This approach, rather than an incremental look at each individual parcel out of context with the other parcels or concept plan, resulted in groups of actions or solutions that will meet the needs and objectives described earlier in this report in order to create an open lands system.

There are three priority actions discussed in this plan which include:

High Priority: Meets level one and two criteria and are discussed in detail in the next section.

Medium Priority: Meets level 1 criteria but there is no threat of loss due to development.

Low Priority: Open lands that do not directly meet high priority needs and are not under threat of development.

RESULTING TOP FIVE PRIORITIES

The highest priority described at each public meeting related to the protection of Natural System Lands. These lands have received the highest ranking due to their sensitivity either as habitat, hazard areas, or riparian vegetation. Thus, the Natural System Parcels are priority 1.

Following this, there are three trail system actions that stand out in the priority analysis. These include, in order of priority: the South Trail (Vail Trail extension and associated trailheads); development of a North Trail; improving stream access; and bike lanes on the frontage roads and shoulders on Vail Valley Drive.

These five priority areas have been analyzed with respect to relative expense, projected income from RETT funding, and a proposed phased approach to implementing these actions. (Table 10 - Six Year Plan).

The South Trail received priority 2 primarily because it simultaneously meets several needs including; more recreational opportunities in and near the core, separation of uses on the trail system (specifically separating pedestrians and bicyclist on the bike path to and through Katsos Ranch, and provides opportunities for a pocket park/ nature area at one of the "trailheads" in East Vail . Additionally, the U.S. Forest Service believes that the South Trail will help reduce pressure on the Eagles Nest Wilderness Area by providing an alternative, high quality alpine trail system in close proximity to the Town.

The North Trail, priority 3, can meet the needs of the West Vail community through trailhead/ nature areas much like the South Trail will for East Vail. While this trail does not directly connect to the core , it will provide additional recreation opportunities for a significant number of people who reside on the north side of the Interstate.

Stream access is still a priority, even though a formal trail is not proposed and has received a priority 4. Improving the bike system throughout Town received priority 5 and will result in much better separation of recreational uses on the entire trail system.

Additionally, community or public use parcels/ actions were analyzed separately and prioritized according to the criteria mentioned above. This analysis resulted in the West Vail Fire Station as the highest priority for public use, and the easements needed for the Vail Valley Water and Sanitation District to ensure clean water for the Town of Vail. Another high priority action is acquisition of the snow dump parcel west of the Public Works shops. All other public use actions fall below these two priorities. Any actions related to these public use items will not be funded through RETT funds which are strictly allocated to open space and recreation related activities.

PRIORITY PLAN
Comprehensive Open Lands Plan
 TOWN OF VAIL VAIL, COLORADO
 DISCUSSION DRAFT
 FEBRUARY 2014

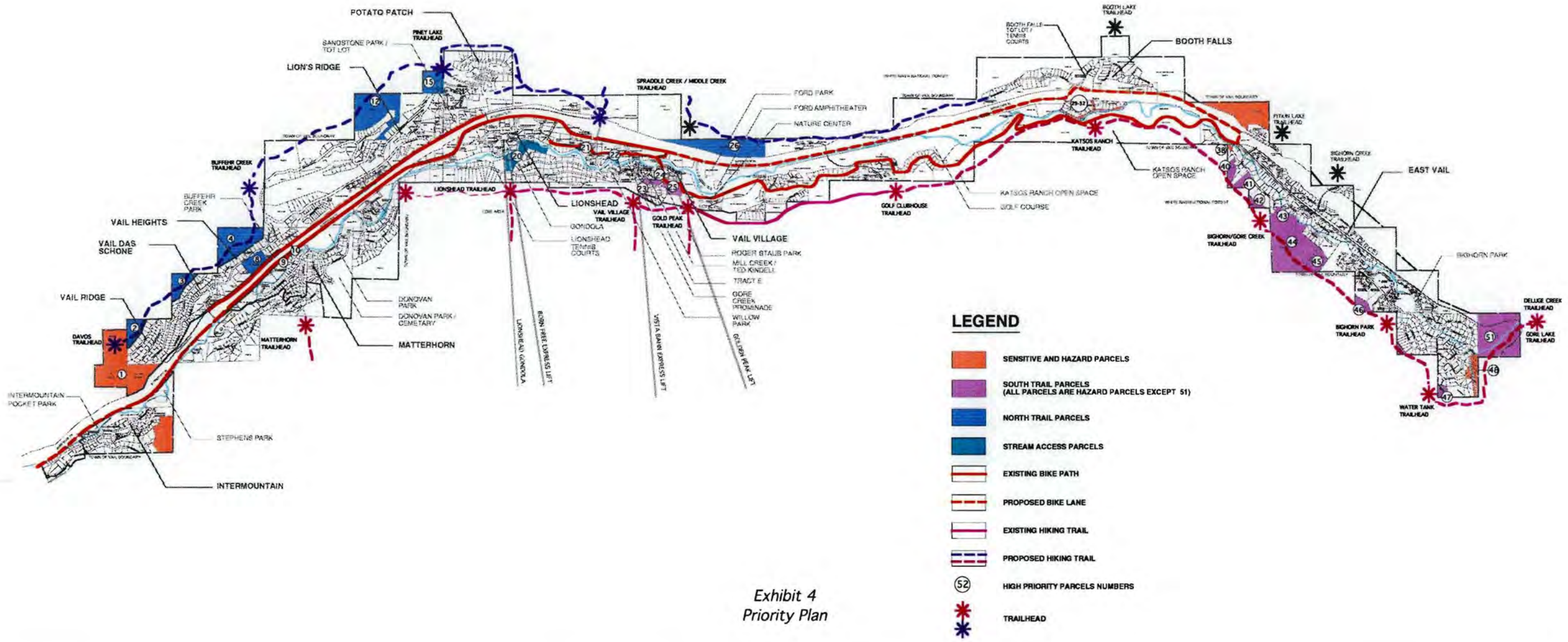


Exhibit 4
Priority Plan

ACTION PLAN

Comprehensive List of Recommended Actions

The following describes in more detail the actions recommended for each parcel. Parcels that are a high priority are highlighted in bold and have an asterisk.



*** Parcel 1: Trappers Run, Lots 16, 19, 21**
High priority: Identified as a sensitive habitat area by Colorado Natural Heritage 1993 survey. Proposed use - open space, trailhead, nature area, tot lot, National Forest System access. Portions or all of this parcel could be traded to the U.S.F.S. if acquired.

*** Parcel 2: Unplated Parcel north of Vail Ridge**
High priority: Acquire land (via tax lien) and trade to the U.S. Forest Service to simplify boundary between TOV and U.S.F.S.. Proposed use - forest land.

*** Parcel 6: Intermountain, Lot 14, 2724 Snowberry Dr.**
High priority: Acquisition of development rights to protect steep slopes and mature coniferous trees. Moderate to high threat of development.



*** Parcel 3: Unplated Parcel north of Vail Das Schone**
High priority: Town confirm ownership and trade to U.S. Forest Service to simplify Town boundary. North Trail will also go through parcel.

*** Parcel 4: Unplated Parcel North of Vail Heights**
High Priority: Town confirm ownership and trade to U.S. Forest Service to simplify Town boundary. North Trail will also go through parcel.

*** Parcel 5: Hud Wirth Property, Tract D**
High Priority: Town acquire (not with RETT funds) and use for possible West Vail Fire Station and/or locals housing and/or employee housing.

Parcel 7: Lot 35, Buffer Creek
Medium priority: TOV acquire for expansion of Buffer Creek Park.

*** Parcel 8: Lot 34, Buffer Creek**
High priority: TOV acquire for expansion of Buffer Creek Park. Would protect riparian area on Buffer Creek. If unable to acquire, then obtain conservation easement for riparian area and trail easement.

*** Parcel 9: Lot 1, Vail Village West, Filing #2**
High priority: TOV acquire tax lien to protect drainage and provide access to Gore Creek. This parcel has added value for future Frontage Road bike lanes.

*** Parcel 10: Lot 2, Vail Village West, Filing #2**
High priority: TOV acquire to maintain access to Gore Creek. This parcel has added value for future frontage road bike lanes.

Parcel 11: Cascade Village Tennis Parcel
Low Priority: Town acquire upper bench of parcel adjacent to Donovan Park. This action does not include Cascade Club Tennis Courts.



*** Parcel 12: Tract A, Lionsridge, Filing #4**
High priority: TOV acquire trail easement through parcel.

Parcel 13: Tract B, Lionsridge, Filing #4
Low Priority: TOV acquire development rights or conservation easement.

Parcel 14: Parcel East of Lot A3, Lionsridge, Filing #1
Low priority: TOV acquire development rights or conservation easement.

*** Parcel 15: Parcel A**
High priority: Trail easement through this LOA parcel for North Trail. This parcel is also a trailhead for the Buffer Creek trail. The Town would like to deannex the north half of the parcel and acquire the south half so that the road would be on TOV property.

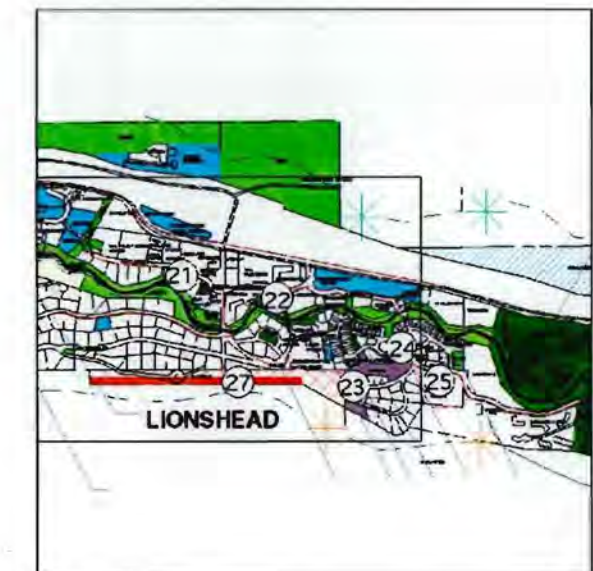
Parcel 16: Portion of Tract D
Medium Priority: Upper Eagle Valley Consolidated Water and Sanitation District willing to sell or swap land. May have value as employee housing. (RETT funds would not be used if future use is employee housing)

Parcel 17: Tract D, Lionsridge, Filing #1
Medium Priority: TOV acquire conservation easement for permanent open space to protect drainage on Red Sandstone Creek.

Parcel 18: Unplated Parcel, Vail Potato Patch, 2nd Filing
Low priority: TOV acquire for open space.

Parcel 19: Unplated Vail Village, 2nd Filing
Medium Priority: TOV acquire conservation easement on area around Red Sandstone Creek to protect trees and stream.

*** Parcel 20: Unplated Parcel in Lionshead**
High priority: TOV acquire or enter into a public agreement with V.A. to protect the wetlands on the site. Site does have multiple social trails which are negatively impacting the hydric soils on the site. One mitigation to consider is a path from the pedestrian bridge near Born Free lift to the Library to focus use on a wood-chip path.



*** Parcel 21: Lot 2, Vail Village, 2nd Filing**

High priority: TOV acquire view easement to maintain view of Gore Creek from West Meadow Drive.

*** Parcel 22: Parcel Adjacent to the International Bridge**

High priority: TOV acquire as natural area in core along Gore Creek which is a riparian area and is located in the floodplain.

*** Parcel 23: Tract E, Vail Village, 5th Filing**

High priority: TOV acquire public use agreement with V.A. to maintain use of existing trail and to create an additional trail which connects into Mill Creek/Ted Kindell pocket park.

*** Parcel 24: Lot D-1, Vail Village**

High priority: TOV acquire trail easement to maintain access to existing trail.

*** Parcel 25: Golden Peak, Ski Base**

High priority: TOV obtain public use agreement with V.A. to maintain access to existing trail.



*** Parcel 26: Unplated Parcel, West of Public Works**

High Priority: TOV acquire with Non RETT funding source for future public works facility expansion. This parcel is also where the snow dump is located. The high priority action recommended is a trail easement for the North Trail.

*** Parcel 27: Parcel C:**

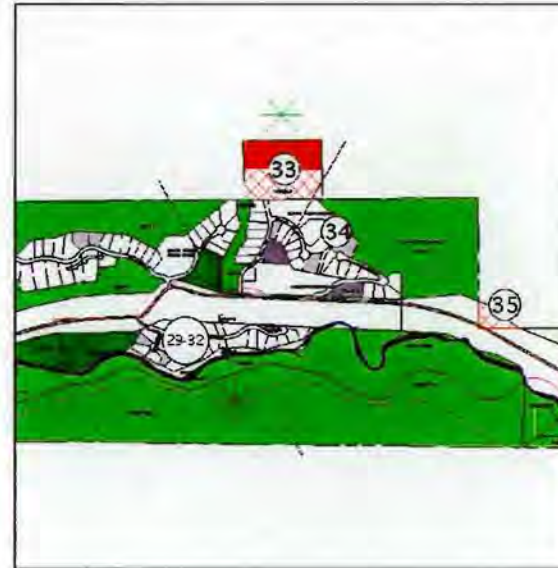
High Priority (LOA parcel): TOV and adjacent owners to acquire northwest portion and deannex the southwest portion

Parcel 27a: Parcel D

Low priority (LOA parcel): TOV and adjacent owners to acquire north portion and deannex south portion (to remain in NFS ownership).

Parcel 28: Parcel E

Medium priority (LOA parcel): TOV has acquired northern portion and needs to deannex southern portion (to remain in U.S. Forest Service ownership).



*** Parcel 29 Tract E, Vail Village, 11th Filing**

High priority: TOV acquire conservation easement or public use agreement for riparian stream tract.

*** Parcel 30: Tract C, Vail Village, 11th Filing**

High priority: TOV acquire conservation easement or public use agreement for riparian stream tract.

*** Parcel 31: Tract B, Vail Village, 11th Filing**

High priority: TOV acquire conservation easement or public use agreement for riparian stream tract.

*** Parcel 32: Tract E, Vail Village, 11th Filing**

High priority: TOV acquire conservation easement or public use agreement for riparian stream tract.

Parcel 33: Parcel

Medium priority (LOA action): TOV acquire the southern portion from the NFS and deannex the northern portion to maintain the existing use by the Water and Sanitation District and allow room to improve the existing trailhead.

Parcel 34: Tract B, Vail Village 12th Filing

Low priority: Conservation easement for existing drainage.

Parcel 35: Parcels G-2, G-3, G-4 and G-5

Low priority LOA parcels: TOV acquire from U.S. Forest Service. Then TOV should trade these parcels to CDOT for parcel 36 (which is now owned by CDOT).



*** Parcel 36: Unplated Land North of East Vail Interchange**

High priority: TOV acquire development rights for open space use or trade parcel(s) 35 for parcel 36. Has potential for development.

Parcel 37: Unplated Land North of I-70

Medium priority: TOV acquire development rights for open space use. Has potential for development.

*** Parcel 38: Bighorn, 2nd Addition, Lot 5**

High priority: TOV acquire parcel which is in floodplain for open space/ trail connection uses.

Parcel 39: Bighorn, 2nd Addition, Lot 1

Low priority: TOV acquire development rights to protect riparian area.

*** Parcel 40: Bighorn Subdivision, 2nd addition, Lots 8, 10, 11**

High priority: TOV acquire both development rights and trail easement for South Trail extension. This parcel is in a geologic hazard area.

*** Parcel 41: Bighorn Subdivision, 2nd Addition, Lot 16**

High priority: TOV acquire both development rights and trail easement for South Trail extension. This parcel is in a geologic hazard area.

*** Parcel 42: Unplated land South of Lots 1-4, Block 2, Bighorn Subdivision, 1st Filing**

High priority: TOV acquire both development rights and trail easement for South Trail extension. This parcel is in a hazard area.



*** Parcel 43: Bighorn Subdivision, Lot 11**

High priority: TOV acquire for trailhead/pocket park to access the proposed South Trail extension. This parcel is in a geologic hazard area.

*** Parcel 44: Unplated land south of Bighorn Estates Subdivisions**

High Priority: TOV acquire trail easement and development rights. This parcel is in a geologic hazard area.

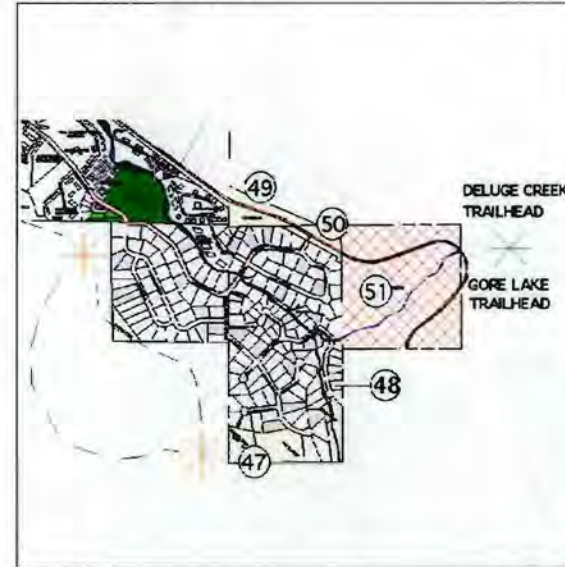


*** Parcel 45: Unplated land south of Forest Glen Subdivision**

High priority: TOV acquire trail easement to access the proposed South Trail extension.

*** Parcel 46: Unplated land south of Mountain Meadows Townhomes and Courtside**

High priority: TOV acquire trail easement to access the proposed South Trail extension. This parcel is in a geologic hazard area.



*** Parcel 47: "Recreation Area" (not including water tank site)**

High priority: TOV acquire conservation easement for trail, trailhead, picnic area and continued use of water tank. This parcel is in a hazard area.

*** Parcel 48: Lots 1-12, Vail Meadows, Filing #2**

High priority: Acquire to protect sensitive riparian area.

Parcel 49: Parcel G

Low priority: LOA parcel: TOV acquire from U.S. Forest Service for road access and open space uses. Southwest corner of the parcel is a wetland.

Parcel 50: Unplated parcel between NFS Parcels G, H

Low priority: TOV acquire from CDOT. The open space objective is to maintain access on the Frontage Road and to preserve the remainder as open space.

*** Parcel 51: Parcel H**

High priority: TOV acquire from the U.S. Forest Service (LOA parcel). High priority for- trail connection and protection of open space and low priority for employee housing. RETT funds not to be used if future uses include housing.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR TOWN-OWNED PARCELS

There are several parcels of land currently in Town ownership that have been included in this study because they have the potential to meet some of the needs identified as part of this plan. These parcels include:

Vail Commons, North Frontage Road West

Employee housing is a highly appropriate use for this site, along with commercial and public use facilities, as needed. This use will help meet needs identified by the Vail Housing Authority. Because this is not an "open space or parks" use, RETT funds will not be used to develop this land.

274 Beaver Dam Road

This lot is a buildable home site zoned primary/secondary. With the sale of this property, the Town could use the proceeds toward the open lands program identified in this plan (combine with RETT funds to further achieve the open space goals). A title check must occur to ensure that protective covenants do not preclude development on the site.

2497, 2485, 2477, and 2487 Garmish Drive

These four lots are located adjacent to the Town Manager's house in West Vail. There is the potential for a small pocket park associated with employee housing on this property which would help meet the park needs of this neighborhood and help address some of the community's housing needs. A trailhead accessing the North Trail is also possible at this location.

Donovan Park

The Town of Vail has an approved Master Plan for Donovan Park that includes a number of active recreation program elements. Comments from the public during the course of this project suggest that the Town should revisit that Master Plan to ensure that

the program developed in 1985 is relevant to today's needs.

Tract A, Vail Village 13th Filing

Recently, a par 3 golf course has been proposed for the site. The site has approximately .9 acres of wetlands on the site. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has not approved a Section 404 permit for this proposal. If the VRD does not receive a favorable vote of the people by December 1, 1994 and the receive a section 404 permit by December 1, 1995, it is this plans recommendation that the property remain as natural open space because of the wetlands on the site.

Unplated Mountain Bell Site

Approximately half of this property (7.71 acres) is intended for affordable housing and the remainder of the site will remain in open space.

Berry Creek, Edwards

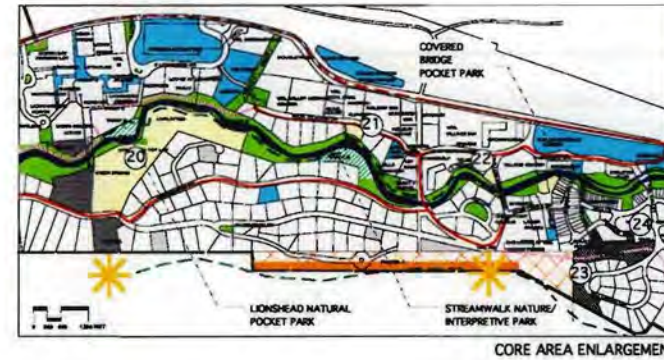
This property is a logical location for some of the recreational needs identified in both this study and the Eagle County and Avon recreation studies. The joint use of this property to meet the needs of a wider population (including Vail residents) is an appropriate and cost effective way to meet recreation needs. Housing is also an appropriate use on this site.

TOV Parcel adjacent to Vail Chapel

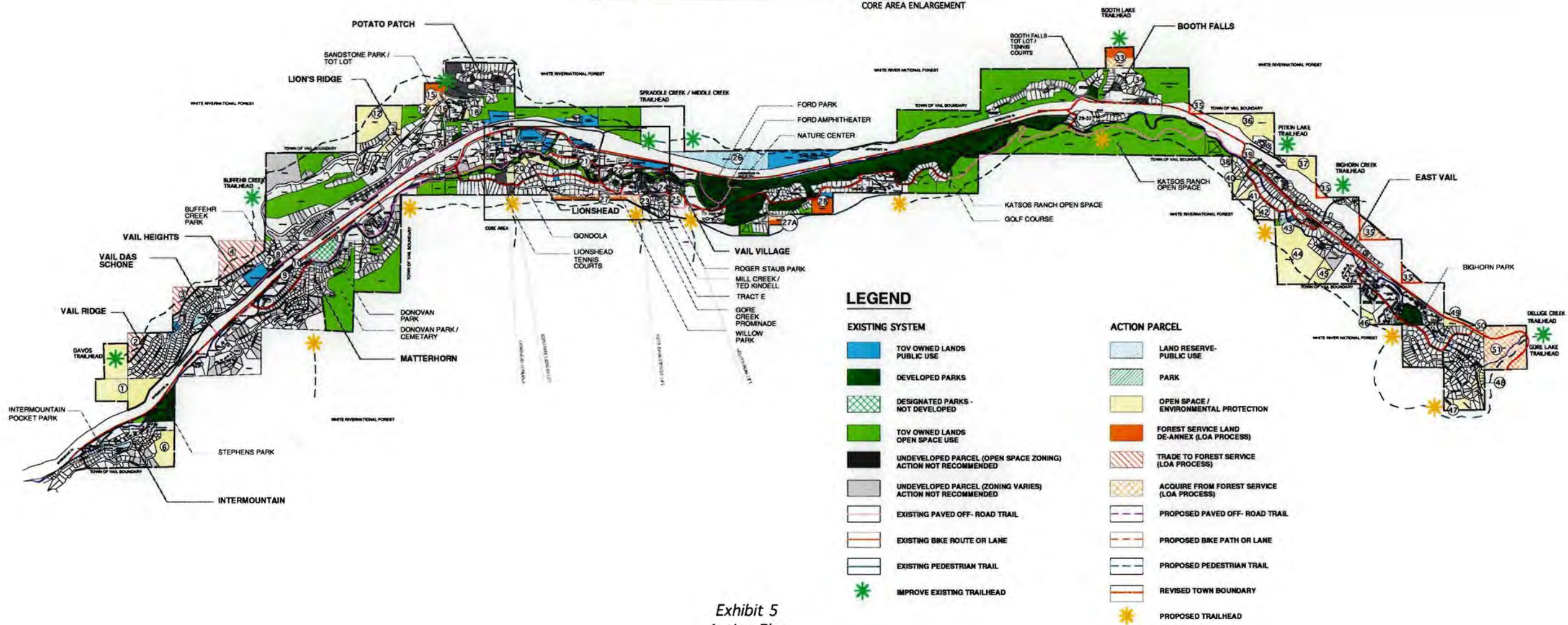
The north bank of the Gore Creek adjacent to the Vail Chapel provides an excellent stream access area and has been identified as a stream access area. Also, this area is desirable for an informal take-out location for kayakers. An additional bench or picnic table would be desirable at this location.

TRAILS AND TRAILHEADS

Improvements and additions to the trail system in Land around Vail are an integral part of the Open Lands Plan. There are numerous opportunities for interpretive education along these trails. The proposed trail system is somewhat similar to trail systems found in the Alps where interconnected trail allow hikers to move around and to mountain villages.



ACTION PLAN
Comprehensive Open Lands Plan
 TOWN OF VAIL VAIL, COLORADO
 FEBRUARY 1984



LEGEND

- | EXISTING SYSTEM | | ACTION PARCEL | |
|---------------------|---|----------------------|--|
| [Blue Box] | TOV OWNED LANDS PUBLIC USE | [Light Blue Box] | LAND RESERVE-PUBLIC USE |
| [Green Box] | DEVELOPED PARKS | [Green Box] | PARK |
| [Cross-hatched Box] | DESIGNATED PARKS - NOT DEVELOPED | [Yellow Box] | OPEN SPACE / ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION |
| [Light Green Box] | TOV OWNED LANDS OPEN SPACE USE | [Orange Box] | FOREST SERVICE LAND DE-ANNEX (LOA PROCESS) |
| [Black Box] | UNDEVELOPED PARCEL (OPEN SPACE ZONING) ACTION NOT RECOMMENDED | [Red-hatched Box] | TRADE TO FOREST SERVICE (LOA PROCESS) |
| [Grey Box] | UNDEVELOPED PARCEL (ZONING VARIES) ACTION NOT RECOMMENDED | [Yellow-hatched Box] | ACQUIRE FROM FOREST SERVICE (LOA PROCESS) |
| [Solid Line] | EXISTING PAVED OFF-ROAD TRAIL | [Dashed Line] | PROPOSED PAVED OFF-ROAD TRAIL |
| [Dashed Line] | EXISTING BIKE ROUTE OR LANE | [Dashed Line] | PROPOSED BIKE PATH OR LANE |
| [Dotted Line] | EXISTING PEDESTRIAN TRAIL | [Dotted Line] | PROPOSED PEDESTRIAN TRAIL |
| [Green Star] | IMPROVE EXISTING TRAILHEAD | [Red Line] | REVISED TOWN BOUNDARY |
| | | [Yellow Star] | PROPOSED TRAILHEAD |

Exhibit 5
Action Plan

ACTION PLAN

Parcel #	Parcel Description	Property Owner(s)	Zoning	Open Space Objective	Proposed Use	Priority
1	Trappers Run, Lots 16, 19, 21	John Ulbrich	Hillside Residential	Environmental Protection, Forest Access	Open Space, Park, Trail, Trail Access	H
2	Unplatted Parcel north of Vail Ridge	L. Ladner, Inc.	Resource, Eagle County	Trade Parcel to Forest Service	National Forest	H
3	Unplatted Parcel north of Vail Das Schone, Filing # 2	Town of Vail (needs confirmation)	Resource, Eagle County	Trade Parcel to Forest Service	National Forest	H
4	Unplatted Parcel north of Vail Heights	Town of Vail (needs confirmation)	Resource, Eagle County	Trade Parcel to Forest Service	National Forest	H
5	Wirth Property, Tract D	Hud Wirth	Two Family Primary/ Secondary	Land Reserve	Housing	H
6	Intermountain, Lot 14, 2724 Snowberry Drive	George B. Miller	Two Family Primary/ Secondary	Environmental Protection	Open Space	H
7	Lot 35, Buffer Creek	Kasparitis Roman Otlij	Two Family Primary/ Secondary	Park	Addition to Buffer Park	M
8	Lot 36, Buffer Creek	Kasparitis Roman Otlij	Two Family Primary/ Secondary	Park	Addition to Buffer Park	H
9	Lot 1, Vail Village West, Filing #2	Vail Valley West	AG-OS	Environmental Protection	Retain Natural Drainage	H
10	Lot 2, Vail Village West, Filing # 2	Aldrote J. Antonio	Two Family Primary/ Secondary	Environmental Protection	Bike Path, Creek Access	H
11	Coldstream	Cascade Club	SDD	Community Park	Addition to Donovan Park	L
12	Tract A, Lionsridge, Filing # 4	Lionsridge Homeowners Association	GB-NOS	Trade Parcel to Forest Service	National Forest	H
13	Tract B, Lionsridge, Filing # 4	Lionsridge Homeowners Association	GB-NOS	Environmental Protection	Open Space, Trail	L
14	Excepted parcel east of lot A3, Lionsridge, Filing # 1	A. L. Shapiro Co.	AG-OS	Environmental Protection	Open Space	L
15	Parcel A, Lionsridge Filing #1	US Forest Service	AG-OS	Road Access, Trail Access	Road Access/Trailhead	H
16	Tract D, Lionsridge Filing #1	Upper Eagle Valley Consolidated W&S Dist.	Public Use District	Land Reserve	Employee Housing	M
17	Tract D, Lionsridge, Filing # 1	Sandstone Creek Condo Association	GB-NOS	Environmental Protection	Retain Natural Drainage	M
18	Unplatted parcel, Vail Potato Patch 2nd filing	Jack Camie	Residential Cluster	Open Space	Open Space	L
19	Unplatted Vail Village, 2nd filing	Holy Cross Electric	Arterial Business District	Land Reserve	Public Use	M
20	Unplatted Parcel south of Gore Creek and north of Forest Road	Vail Associates, Inc.	AG-OS	Parks and Trails (?)	Park, Trail	H
21	Lot 2 VV 2nd Filing, 122 West Meadow Drive	Weist Otto	Two Family Primary/ Secondary	Gore Creek Access	Gore Creek, Streamwalk Access	H
22	Parcel near International Bridge, Vail Village 1st filing	Vail Associates, Inc.	Public Accommodation	Open Space, Gore Creek Access	Open Space	H
23	Tract E, Vail Village, 5th Filing	Vail Associates, Inc.	AG-OS	Trail/ Environmental Protection	Retain Natural Drainage/Trail	H
24	Lot D-1, Vail Village, 5th Filing	Vail Associates, Inc.	AG-OS	Trail	Trail	H
25	Golden Peak 458 Ski Base	Vail Associates, Inc.	Ski Base Rec District	Trail Access	Trail	H
26	Unplatted Parcel north of I-70 and west of TOV shops	Vail Associates, Inc.	AG-OS/ Public Use	Land Reserve/ Trail	Public Works Expansion, Snow Storage	H
27	Parcel C	US Forest Service	GB-NOS	Environmental Protection	LOA Parcel	H
27a	Parcel D	US Forest Service	AG-OS	Environmental Protection	National Forest	L
28	Parcel E	US Forest Service	AG-OS	Environmental Protection	National Forest	M
29	Tract F, Vail Village, 11th Filing	Vail Associates, Inc.	AG-OS	Environmental Protection/Recreation	Retain Riparian Corridor	H
30	Tract C, Vail Village 11th Filing	Vail Associates, Inc.	AG-OS	Environmental Protection	Retain Riparian Corridor	H
31	Tract B, Vail Village, 11th Filing	Vail Associates, Inc.	AG-OS	Environmental Protection	Retain Natural Drainage	H
32	Tract E, Vail Village, 11th Filing	Vail Associates, Inc.	AG-OS	Environmental Protection	Retain Natural Drainage	H
33	Parcel F	US Forest Service	Public Use	Water Storage/ Trailhead Access	Water Storage/ Trailhead	M
34	Tract B, Vail Village, 12th Filing	Vail Associates, Inc.	AG-OS	Environmental Protection	Retain Natural Drainage	L
35	Parcels G-2, G-3, G-4, G-5	US Forest Service	GB-NOS	Environmental Protection	Open Space	L
36	Unplatted land north of East Vail interchange	CDOT	Two Family Residential	Environmental Protection	Open Space	H
37	Unplatted land north of I-70 and Bighorn Subdivision, 3rd addition	Eagle Co. Development Corp.	Two Family Residential	Environmental Protection	Open Space	M
38	Bighorn 2nd Addition, Lot 5	Athena Buxman	Two Family Primary/ Secondary	Environmental Protection	Open Space/ Trail	H
39	Bighorn 2nd Addition, Lot 1	Athena Buxman	Two Family Primary/ Secondary	Environmental Protection	Open Space/ Trail	L
40	Bighorn Subdivision, 2nd Addition, Lots 8, 10, 11	Athena Buxman	Two Family Primary/ Secondary	Environmental Protection	Open Space/ Trail	H
41	Bighorn Subdivision 2nd Addition, Lot 16	Stanley and Martha Wilson	AG-OS	Env. Protection, High Scenic Value	Open Space	H
42	Unplatted land south of lots 1-4, Block 2, Bighorn Subdivision, 1st filing	Consolidated Oil and Gas, Inc.	AG-OS	Environmental Protection	Open Space	H
43	Bighorn Subdivision, Lot 11	H. DeBody, H. Demmalee	Two Family Residential	Trailhead/Pocket Park	Trailhead	H
44	Unplatted land south of Bighorn Estates Subdivision	Cara Beutel	AG-OS	Environmental Protection	Open Space/Trailhead	H
45	Unplatted land south of Forest Glen Subdivision	Consolidated Oil and Gas, Inc.	AG-OS	Environmental Protection	Open Space/Trail	H
46	Unplatted land south of Mountain Meadows Townhouse and Courtside	Consolidated Oil and Gas, Inc.	AG-OS	Environmental Protection	Open Space/ Trail	H
47	"Recreation Area" - not including water tank site	Assessor does not know	Public Use	Environmental Protection/ Public Use	Open Space/Trailhead/trail	H
48	Lots 1 and 2, Vail Meadows, Filing # 2	Holsten (1&2)& Vail City Corp (3-12)	AG-OS	Environmental Protection	Open Space	H
49	Parcel G	US Forest Service	NAT-OS	Environmental Protection	Open Space/Road Access	L
50	Unplatted parcel between Forest Service Parcels G and H	CDOT	NAT-OS	Road Access	Open Space/Road Access	L
51	Parcel H	US Forest Service	NAT-OS	Land Reserve/ Trail Access	Open Space/ Trail Access/Housing	H

Table 8
Action Parcels
Listed West to East

Parcel #	Parcel Description	Protection Techniques							Management System				Management Issues									
		Confirm TOV Ownership	TOV Acquire Fee	TOV Acquire Tax Lien	F.S. Acquire Fee	Land Trade	Obtain Development Rights	Easement (Access/Corridor)	Donation	Use Agreement	Bargain Sale	TOV	Forest Service	Cooperative	Rec. District	Landowner	Land Trust	Liability	Hazards	Forest Management	Patrol/Maintenance	Development (Park, Trailhead, etc.)
1	Trappers Run, Lots 16, 19, 21																					
2	Unplatted Parcel north of Vail Ridge																					
3	Unplatted Parcel north of Vail Das Schoe, Filing # 2																					
4	Unplatted Parcel north of Vail Heights																					
5	Wirth Property, Tract D																					
6	Intermountain, Lot 14, 2724 Snowberry Drive																					
7	Lot 35, Buffer Creek																					
8	Lot 36, Buffer Creek																					
9	Lot 1, Vail Village West, Filing #2																					
10	Lot 2, Vail Village West, Filing # 2																					
11	Coldstream																					
12	Tract A, Lionsridge, Filing # 4																					
13	Tract B, Lionsridge, Filing # 4																					
14	Excepted parcel east of lot A3, Lionsridge, Filing # 1																					
15	Parcel A																					
16	Tract D																					
17	Tract D, Lionsridge, Filing # 1																					
18	Unplatted parcel, Vail Potato Patch 2nd filing																					
19	Unplatted Vail Village, 2nd filing																					
20	Unplatted Parcel south of Gore Creek and north of Forest Road																					
21	Lot 2 VV 2nd Filing, 122 West Meadow Drive																					
22	Parcel near International Bridge, Vail Village 1st filing																					
23	Tract E, Vail Village, 5th Filing																					
24	Lot D-1, Vail Village, 5th Filing																					

Parcel #	Parcel Description	Protection Techniques							Management System				Management Issues									
		Confirm TOV Ownership	TOV Acquire Fee	TOV Acquire Tax Lien	F.S. Acquire Fee	Land Trade	Obtain Development Rights	Easement (Access/Corridor)	Donation	Use Agreement	Bargain Sale	TOV	Forest Service	Cooperative	Rec. District	Landowner	Land Trust	Liability	Hazards	Forest Management	Patrol/Maintenance	Development (Park, Trailhead, etc.)
25	Golden Peak 458 Ski Base																					
26	Unplatted Parcel north of I-70 and west of TOV shops																					
27	Parcel D																					
28	Parcel E																					
29	Tract F, Vail Village, 11th Filing																					
30	Tract C, Vail Village 11th Filing																					
31	Tract B, Vail Village, 11th Filing																					
32	Tract E, Vail Village, 11th Filing																					
33	Parcel F																					
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35	Parcels G-2, G-3, G-4, G-5																					
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38	Bighorn 2nd Addition, Lot 5																					
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44	Unplatted land south of Bighorn Estates Subdivision																					
45	Unplatted land south of Forest Glen Subdivision																					
46	Unplatted land south of Mountain Meadows Townhouse and Courtyard																					
47	*Recreation Area* - not including water tank site																					
48	Lots 1 - 12, Vail Meadows, Filing # 2																					
49	Parcel G																					
50	Unplatted parcel between Forest Service Parcels G and H																					
51	Parcel H																					

Table 9
Protection and Management Techniques for Action Parcels



The objective of the trail system is to create a looping trail system around the Town of Vail. A feasibility analysis should be done to make a final determination where trail easements are needed.

An interpretive program could be developed in conjunction with Vail Associates, the U.S. Forest Service, and the Vail Recreation District to meet a variety of goals shared by the Town and these other entities. Additionally, a comprehensive sign program should be designed and implemented to facilitate access to, and travel on, the trail system.

Close coordination with the USFS and VA will be critical in creating this trail system. Trails on NFS lands will require design review by the U.S. Forest Service and compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act.

Trail uses will also be carefully reviewed by the Town and the U.S. Forest Service. The South Trail in East Vail should only be a summer hiking trail. However, the North Trail could be used for cross country skiing in the winter. The North Trail and trails connecting V.A. trails could also provide single track cycling opportunities in the summer.

In this plan, trailheads are intended to go beyond the traditional use of trailheads. Trailheads can be a combination of a place to access a trail system and a pocket park or nature area. This plan is intended to augment the Vail Transportation Plan and Vail Recreation Plan. Specific recommendations for improvements to the existing system and new additions are described below:

SOUTH TRAIL

EXTEND VAIL TRAIL TO EAST VAIL

There is the potential to extend the Vail Trail to East Vail and Gore Creek Campground to provide an alternative hiking experience.

LIONSHEAD TRAILHEAD - NEW

A trail information "kiosk" with trail maps and signs within the Lionshead core area is recommended to serve as a "Village trail head".

VAIL VILLAGE TRAILHEAD - NEW

A trail information "kiosk" with trail maps and signs within the Town core area is recommended.

GOLDEN PEAK TRAILHEAD - NEW

Provide signs, bike racks, and trail extension(s) to the existing bike path and/or parking at Golden Peak to link the Vail Trail to the Village. Formal connections are also needed between the Golden Peak Trailhead and Pirate Ship Park and the pedestrian bridge accessing Ford Park.

MATTERHORN TRAILHEAD - NEW

Signs and enforcement by the Town to limit on-street parking is recommended. Trail work should be done to minimize erosion currently taking place.

GOLF CLUBHOUSE TRAILHEAD - NEW

Provide signs and bike racks at the mid-point of the Vail Trail (near the golf clubhouse). The first 1/4 mile of the trail should be re-routed to eliminate the excessively steep portion of the trail.

BIGHORN/ GORE CREEK TRAILHEAD - NEW

Locate a trailhead on Willow Way in the Bighorn Subdivision on Town of Vail owned land to access the proposed Vail Trail extension. Provide a small amount of off street parking, signs, and a bike rack.

BIGHORN PARK TRAILHEAD - NEW

Locate a trailhead south of Bighorn Park to access the proposed South Trail extension. Provide off-street parking, bike racks and signs.

WATER TANK TRAILHEAD - NEW

Provide a bike and pedestrian access trailhead with signs and bike racks to connect to the proposed East Vail extension and the Gore Creek Campground trailhead. This would be a summer/fall trail only because of the avalanche concerns in this area.

WESTIN TRAILHEAD-NEW

There is currently a ski trail (catwalk) which allows people to ski to the Westin from the front face of the mountain. In the summer this catwalk could be used as a hiking trail to access V.A.'s network of trails.

GORE CREEK ACCESS AREAS

PARCELS 20, 21, 22 AND VAIL CHAPEL

Identify these parcels as stream access areas with signs. The purpose of these access areas is to allow public access to the Gore Creek. Parcel 20 will require some mitigation to prevent further

deterioration of vegetation and soils from the use of "social" trails on the site. Mitigation solutions will have to be discussed with Vail Associates and the neighborhood. The Chapel access would provide a convenient take-out area for kayakers. The stream tract adjacent to the Chapel is owned by the Town and is not identified as an action parcel. Another recommendation is that a map be created to identify public areas along Gore Creek and discuss the rules of a Gold Medal stream

MILL CREEK CONNECTION

Extend pedestrian path adjacent to Mill Creek in Ted Kindell pocket park to the south to connect with existing paved trail. (Christiania Lodge will provide as part of redevelopment)

NORTH TRAIL

UPPER RIDGE CONNECTOR TRAIL

Potential to develop a trail along the north side of Town to link existing trailheads and provide a south-facing trail that will open up in the early spring. This trail should not be located near the Eagle's Nest Wilderness Area in order to avoid further impacts there.

DAVOS TRAILHEAD - EXISTING

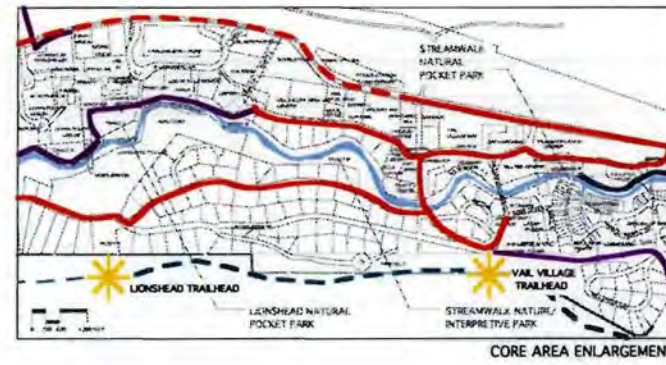
Potential to relocate trailhead onto Trappers Run if property or easements are obtained. If not relocated, bike racks and signs/ enforcement by the Town to limit on-street parking are recommended.

BUFFEHR CREEK TRAILHEAD - EXISTING

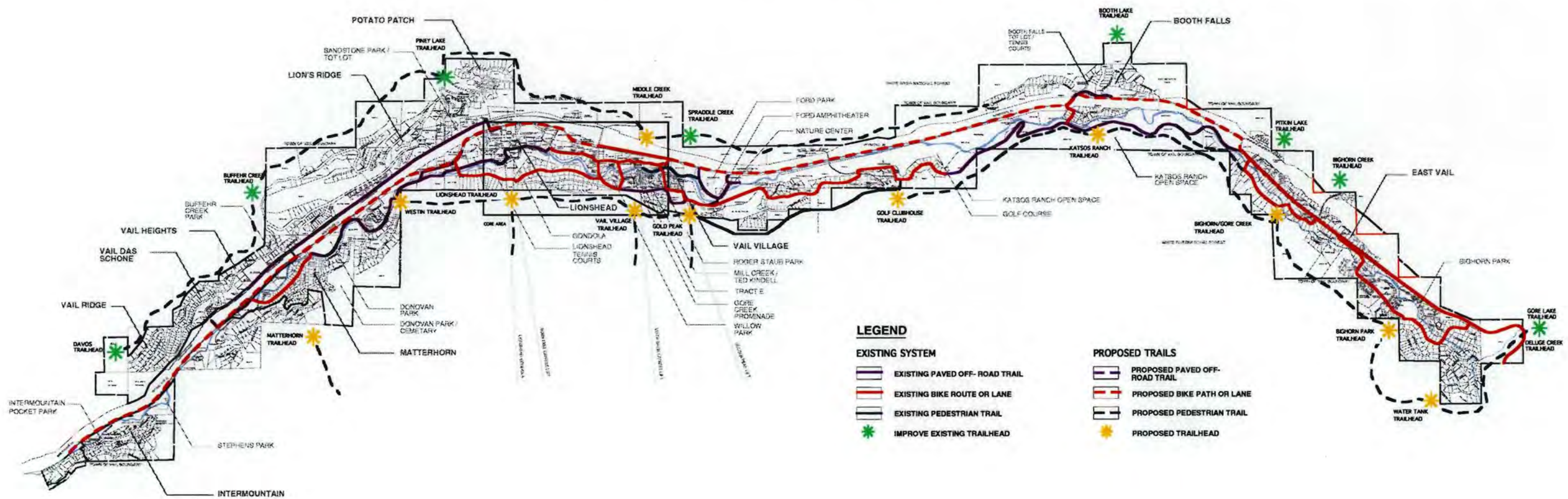
Signs and enforcement by the Town to limit on-street parking is recommended. Bike racks and safe bike access to the trailhead are also recommended. The U.S. Forest Service believes that they currently do not own the parking area and are concerned that public access to this area be permanently maintained.

PINEY LAKE TRAILHEAD - EXISTING

Expand use of Piney Lake trailhead to year-round (currently functions as a winter trailhead) and relocate to Parcel 15. At the new location, provide off-street parking and a trail connection up the drainage to link to the Piney Lake Road. Also provide signs and bike racks.



TRAILS PLAN
Comprehensive Open Lands Plan
 TOWN OF VAIL VAIL, COLORADO
 PREPARED BY
 FEBRUARY 1981



ACTION PLAN

Exhibit 6
Trails Plan



SPRADDLE CREEK TRAILHEAD - EXISTING

As part of the Spraddle Creek development, provide improved trailhead at Spraddle Creek including off-street parking, signs and bike racks.

MIDDLE CREEK TRAILHEAD - NEW

This lower trailhead, just west of Spraddle Creek, will access trails that connect to Piney Lake and the new Tenth Mountain Trail Association huts via an off road bike path, which would greatly add to the mountain biking opportunities in this area. Include at this trailhead off-street parking, signs and bike racks.

BOOTH LAKE TRAILHEAD - EXISTING

Signs and enforcement by the Town to limit on-street parking are recommended. Trail is heavily over-used. Bike racks and safe bike access to the trailhead are also recommended.

PITKIN LAKE TRAILHEAD - EXISTING

At existing location, bike racks and signs/ enforcement by the Town to limit on-street parking are recommended. There is the potential to provide an improved trailhead with off-street parking on Parcel 33 if easements are obtained.

BIGHORN CREEK TRAILHEAD - EXISTING

Small, off-street parking area recommended in flat area near existing trailhead. Design solutions for parking should be reviewed by the neighborhood. Bike racks and signs/ enforcement by the Town to limit on-street parking at the cul-de-sac is also recommended.

GORE LAKE TRAILHEAD - EXISTING

Safety improvements for trailhead access and parking and installation of bike racks are recommended. With possible trade of parcel 51 to the Town from the U.S. Forest Service, development and management issues need to be clarified. Town development of the trailhead with U.S.F.S maintenance/ management is recommended.

BIKE SYSTEM

FRONTAGE ROAD BIKE LANES

Provide striped and signed bike lanes on both sides of the frontage roads the entire length of the valley. Key segments of the bike path which are already

funded include: Conoco Station to Dowd Junction and Red Sandstone School to Spraddle Creek subdivision

PAVED SHOULDERS ON VAIL VALLEY DRIVE TO SUNBURST DRIVE

Pave shoulders on Vail Valley Drive for a safer recreation path east of the core area. The right of way (ROW) is too narrow for complete bike lanes on either side, but paved shoulders will make the recreation path significantly safer and easier to use for both drivers and cyclists/ skaters/ pedestrians.

BIKE PATH EXTENSION FROM WEST VAIL INTERCHANGE TO SAFEWAY

Complete separated bike path along North Frontage Road by linking the West Vail Interchange with the west end of the bike path near Safeway.

LAND MANAGEMENT

Two key concepts underlie the proposed management system for Vail's open lands. First, the Town should establish a cooperative management system with both the U.S. Forest Service and Vail Associates. The need for these new management partnerships stems from the fact that a large portion of the lands which can provide recreational and open space benefit to the Town, lie outside the Town boundaries. Defining a management approach which clearly identifies responsibilities is in the interests of all parties. Second, with the addition of new open space lands and trails called for in this plan, the Town needs to develop a management capability to provide appropriate stewardship and maintenance to these properties.

COOPERATIVE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

U.S. Forest Service

This plan proposes a number of improvements to National Forest System lands to improve conditions in the National Forest System and provide Vail visitors and residents with greater recreational opportunities. The trailhead and trail improvements proposed in this plan need to be constructed and maintained. The Town and the U.S. Forest Service should also discuss the desirability of toilets at heavi-

ly used trailheads. Since these improvements will primarily benefit the Town it is important to develop a realistic sharing of the construction and maintenance costs. It is recommended that a cooperative approach be taken to development of trailheads, trails, signs, and maintenance of trail systems. All trail systems that are proposed on NFS lands must comply with the National Environmental Policy Act which will require the Town and the U.S.F.S. to cooperate in the preparation of environmental analysis for the trail system.

Vail Associates Trails Plan

This plan proposes that a joint system of trailheads and signs be developed for access to Vail Mountain.

- a. Trails and trailheads on Vail Mountain to be constructed by VA with possible financial participation by the Town and maintained and managed by Vail Associates with possible financial participation from the Town.
- b) Vail Associates and the Town should cooperate on providing village trailheads and informational kiosks to improve trail connections between the Town and the Vail Associates permit area.

TOWN OF VAIL PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

One of the goals of this plan is to accomplish the open space objectives of the TOV in a cost effective manner which tailors the protection technique to the Town's open space objectives. In a number of instances this means that instead of acquiring lands the Town may pursue alternative techniques which keep land on the tax rolls and minimize management responsibilities. As discussed earlier, this can be accomplished through the use of land trades and the purchase or donation of conservation and trail easements. The Town's ability to negotiate in a flexible and cooperative spirit will determine, to a great extent, whether it can obtain many of the interests in land that it seeks at minimal cost and management burden. There are five components of the proposed property management strategy.

- 1) Easement and Land Negotiator
The TOV should engage the services of a skilled real estate negotiator that has had experience in working with landowners on easements, bargain sales, tax advantaged



gifts, installment purchases, land trades, advantages of public acquisition and donations of partial interests in property. The negotiator should work with the TOV on the priority acquisition program to structure all acquisitions, whether full fee or partial interests such as easements, in a manner which minimizes the cost to the Town and meets landowner objectives. As has been demonstrated by many land trusts, this type of creative approach to land protection can significantly reduce protection costs and also minimize land maintenance obligations. The negotiator can be either a TOV employee or a contractor, but must dedicate a significant amount of time to these negotiations if they are to save the Town acquisition funds and management expense. The negotiator must be capable of working with the Town attorney on a variety of acquisition and easement instruments.

- 2) **Management, Maintenance and Liability Audit**
Prior to the time that a property is acquired by the Town, an audit will be performed of the management requirements and site conditions which require Town expense. The maintenance fund within the RETT funds could be expanded by the annual operating expenses for each parcel of land if they are significant. The services of a professional Forester may be desired to analyze the implications of maintenance and forest management on a number of the action parcels. Other areas that should be included in a audit include: previous owners & activities; existence of hazards, e.g. rockfall, debris flow; storage or release of hazardous materials on the site; and condition of any existing infrastructure that may require maintenance.
- 3) **Expand Capability of Landscape Maintenance Operations & Forest Management**
This plan seeks to minimize the additional management requirements on the Landscape Maintenance Fund for the maintenance of park and open space lands that may be acquired by the Town. However, there may

be a need to expand this current capacity to manage these lands. The Town should also consider contracting or hiring on a part-time basis a professional forester to help manage Town forest resources.

- 4) **Establish a Junior Ranger Program**
As the open land system increases in size, the Town should consider establishing a Junior Ranger program to assist in maintenance functions and productively engage the youth of the Town. A growing number of communities with open land systems are utilizing local high school students in the summer to perform a variety of land management tasks. Most often these tasks relate to trail maintenance, trail construction, general maintenance and supplementing ranger patrols. These Junior Ranger programs have proven to be extremely popular with the students, have served to educate them on stewardship issues and have proven to be cost effective in performing certain tasks. They do require a significant amount of organization and supervision but are worth the effort. A variety of federal and state summer employment programs might assist in supporting such a program. This program may be of interest to the VRD and could be managed through the Nature Center.
- 5) **Utilize Volunteer Assistance to Build Trails and Monitor TOV Owned Lands**
There is significant precedence in Colorado for volunteer construction of trails. Both Volunteers for Outdoor Colorado and the Colorado Trail, among others, are examples of volunteer, non-profit organizations with trail design and construction expertise. One of the many benefits of utilizing volunteers is that it will connect the community to its resources and give the participants a sense of stewardship. Once a trail or other facility is constructed, volunteers can be utilized in an "adopt-a-trail" type program to help maintain the facility.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

The Town should move in an aggressive and proactive fashion in three key areas if it is to create the open space system identified in this plan. The first is the design of the new community-wide trail system and application for funds, the second is the negotiation for those key priority parcels identified in the plan, and the third is structuring the RETT funds to meet acquisition objectives. There are options for additional funding sources, described below.

FUNDING SOURCES

The Town of Vail is fortunate that it has a dedicated source of funding for the acquisition, development and maintenance of park, recreation and open space lands. This is the Real Estate Transfer Tax (RETT) which is a 1% tax on all real estate transfers within the Town of Vail. Over the past five years this tax has generated \$1.3 to \$2 million in revenues annually. The revenues from RETT are allocated to a variety of uses including: purchase of open space; debt service for previous open space purchases; park and trail development and maintenance; and repayment of other Town funds (i.e. Capital Improvement Fund) which were used to previously acquire open space. Due to the sizable amount of the revenue which is allocated to development and maintenance of park and open space facilities, only a portion is available for acquisition. However, the Town has the ability to borrow or bond against the future income stream which indicates a capacity to significantly leverage the funds available for acquisition. The Town Council has authority over the allocation and use of the RETT funds. The creative use and management of this fund offers the greatest opportunity for the Town to acquire the lands designated for purchase.

Other sources of funding potentially available to the Town include:

- 1) **State Trail Funds from the Colorado Department of Parks and Outdoor Recreation**
Stuart McDonald, State Trails Coordinator
Colorado Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation, 1313 Sherman Street, Room 618, Denver, Colorado, 80203, (303) 866-3437.



- 2) Lottery and GOCO Funds
 Great Outdoors Colorado Trust Fund, c/o
 Kenneth Salazar, Board Chairman, Colorado
 Department of Natural Resources, 1313
 Sherman Street, Room 718, Denver,
 Colorado, 80203, (303) 866-3311.

The passage of Amendment 8 in November, 1992 established the Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) Trust Fund. When the Colorado lottery was established in 1980, most Coloradoans thought that proceeds were going to be directed to parks, recreation and open space as specified in the referendum. However, the legislature funded a variety of capital projects with lottery proceeds so that less than half the net revenues were going to the intended purposes. The passage of Amendment 8 clearly directs all lottery proceeds to the GOCO Trust Fund and the Conservation Trust Fund. The GOCO Trust Fund is entirely funded by lottery revenues and will be phased in over the next five years as programs currently funded by the lottery are terminated.

A fifteen member, governor appointed board has been appointed to oversee the direction of the program. Eventually, GOCO may have as much as \$35 million to distribute to four program areas. These include State Outdoor Recreation, State Division of Wildlife, local parks grants, and open space grants. The board has begun meeting and expects to have an executive director by the first of the year. The first cycle of grants should begin by Spring 1994. Vail would be able to compete for funds from both the local grants and open space grants portions of the program. While the criteria for rewarding funds has not been finalized, initial indications are that those communities which established their open land and park priorities and have dedicated resources to these issues will be in a better position to compete for funds. The first year funding level is expected to be in the range of \$10 to \$12 million.

- 3) Sales or other Town Taxes
 Given the availability of the RETT funds it is unlikely that another tax would be dedicated to open space acquisition.

- 4) County Open Space Fund
 It has been proposed that Eagle County establish a funding mechanism to protect open space in the County. An Open Lands Committee has been created to determine the best way to protect open lands in Eagle County. Creating a land trust is one idea that is being explored by the committee. If a land trust was created it may serve as a vehicle for protecting lands in Vail. However, it is anticipated that the primary objective of a County land trust would be to protect agricultural open space in unincorporated areas of Eagle County.

PHASING

The RETT funds provide the Town with a substantial source of funds for implementing the Comprehensive Open Lands Plan. The Town Finance Department has produced several scenarios of RETT revenues which indicate the amount of funds available for existing programs and to fund new acquisition and development of park, recreation and trail facilities. In addition to the Town's scenarios (scenarios 1&2), another scenario (scenario 3) was produced assuming a higher level of revenue. The three revenue scenario that were examined are:

- Scenario 1 - \$1.2 million,
- Scenario 2 - \$1.5 million, and
- Scenario 3 - \$1.7 million.

The average of the past five years RETT revenues is slightly in excess of \$1.7 million, with two years close to or above \$2 million. Scenario number three, \$1.7 million in revenues per year, was selected to analyze the potential amount of funds available for open space acquisition and park and trail projects. As in the other two scenarios, \$1.6 million was budgeted for projects in 1993. However, because of the increase in revenues and an assumption that a fund balance of \$800,000 would be maintained annually from then on, significant increases in funds available for projects can be seen. The \$800,000 fund balance minimum has been identified as a desirable cushion

for potential changes in revenue and unanticipated short-term needs. As a result, the following amounts are projected for the six year period from 1994 through 1999.

1994	\$1,400,000
1995	\$ 300,000
1996	\$ 300,000
1997	\$ 850,000
1998	\$ 850,000
1999	\$ 800,000
TOTAL	\$4,500,000

RETT funds decline sharply in 1995 because the existing fund balance in excess of \$800,000 is utilized in 1994. In addition, after 1996 the transfers to capital projects for debt service are completely paid off so that the amount available increases by over \$500,000.

FOUR YEAR FUNDING NEEDS

The high priority lands for the Vail Open Space System fall into three categories for protection. These are full fee purchase, obtaining trail and conservation easements, and funding trail, trailhead and park improvements. Cost estimates are only available on fee purchases since cost may vary dramatically depending on individual negotiations for easements. In the fee purchase category, the purchase of the sensitive natural areas, riparian areas and full fee trail easements total between \$2.5 and \$3.0 million. The cost of acquiring trail and conservation easements may vary widely between landowners. The objective is to obtain as many of these easements through donation as possible. If we assume that most of these can be obtained through donations and bargain sales, but that there will need to be a significant amount of negotiation and transaction time attached to obtaining these easements we can allocate in the range of \$200,000 annually to this effort over a five year period. Finally, the new trail, trailhead and park construction will require an analysis of the feasibility and design of these facilities before accurate estimates are possible.



Year	Priority Action	Negotiations and Acquisition	Design and Construction	Budget	Total Cost	RETT Revenues
1994	Environmental Protection	Land Negotiator Negotiate Easements Negotiate Purchase Begin Land Trade Negotiations (LOA)		50,000 40,000 2,200,000 20,000		
	SouthTrail/ East Vail	Negotiate Easements	Design Begin Construction Signage Program Neighborhood Planning	50,000 60,000 30,000 20,000 15,000		
	North Trail/West Vail		Neighborhood Planning	15,000	2,500,000	1,400,000
1995	Environmental Protection	Land Negotiator Negotiate Purchase Negotiate Easements Continue Land Trade (LOA)		50,000 230,000 20,000 20,000		
	SouthTrail/ East Vail	Negotiate Easements	Construction	20,000 220,000		
	Stream access/ Core Area	Design signs and/or maps of stream access areas		10,000		
	North Trail/West Vail	Negotiate Easements		40,000	610,000	300,000
1996	Environmental Protection	Land Negotiator Negotiate Easements Negotiate Purchase Continue Land Trade (LOA)		50,000 20,000 100,000 20,000		
	SouthTrail/ East Vail		Construction	50,000		
	Stream Access/Core Area		Mitigate impacts/Consolidate Trail on VA Property	10,000		
	North Trail/West Vail	Negotiate Easements	Design Begin Construction	20,000 60,000 80,000		
	Bike Lanes/ Bike Improvements		Design	30,000	440,000	300,000
1997	Begin Lower Priority Parcel Negotiations	Land Negotiator Negotiate Easements Negotiate Purchase		50,000 20,000 150,000		
	Bike Lanes/ Bike Improvements		Construction	550,000		
	North Trail/West Vail		Construction	180,000	950,000	850,000
1998	Continue Payments					850,000
1999	Continue Payments					800,000
				TOTAL	4,500,000	4,500,000

Table 10
Six Year Plan

From this preliminary analysis, the following expenditures can be made:

	1994	1995	1996	1997
Environ. Protection	2,310,000	320,000	190,000	220,000
Parks/ Trails	190,000	290,000	220,000	180,000
Bike Lanes			30,000	550,000
TOTAL	2,500,000	610,000	440,000	950,000

TOTAL FIVE YEAR PERIOD: \$4,500,000

By committing money over a four year period and paying the commitment over a 6 year period the Town can meet the estimated costs for this plan. It should be recognized that the costs estimated in Table 10 could vary significantly based on:

- 1) Negotiations on individual parcels.
- 2) Based on zoning, Parcel 1 does have development rights and a developer is currently proposing a subdivision on this site. The RETT fund balance referenced in Table 10 will greatly hinge on the disposition of this property.
- 3) Expand the amount of time for the easement-negotiations and trail/park construction program and reduce the annual expenditure for these items. In addition, if a substantial amount of the trail and trailhead construction can be accomplished by volunteer trail construction crews, the construction budget could be reduced.
- 4) The TOV could borrow or bond against the RETT to meet the shortfall or combine borrowing with a reduction in the fund balance to meet these anticipated expenditures. The borrowing could occur in the second year after one years operation of the easement acquisition and trails/parks construction program so that the amounts allocated to these activities could be evaluated and perhaps reduced.



SIX YEAR PLAN

The Six Year Plan to implement the Vail Comprehensive Open Lands Plan consists of a set of specific actions for a four year implementation program and a six year payment plan. The objective of this plan is to closely match the implementation actions to projected RETT revenues .

The Six Year Plan will address primarily the priority projects which have been identified through this process. These include the environmentally sensitive lands, the South Trail properties, the Stream Access in the Town core, the North Trail/West Vail properties and completion of the bike lanes on the Frontage Road (See Table 10). It is important to remember that only about one half of the properties identified for protection will be included in these priority areas. However, year four of the Action Plan will begin to address the acquisition/protection of these areas. It is expected that in year four there will be an evaluation of the program to-date to assess the process and techniques utilized to ensure that the protection process is occurring in as timely, creative and most cost effective fashion as possible.

NEXT STEPS

The following generally describes the next steps that should be taken to implement the Comprehensive Open Lands Plan.

Hire or Contract the Services of a Property Manager

A property manager should be contracted to assist the Town with land negotiations. This person must be skilled in real estate transactions and negotiating easements. This person should also closely review RETT expenditures and make recommendations for the restructuring of this fund.

Council Review of 6 year plan and RETT Fund

Shortly after adoption of this plan, the Vail Town Council should review the six year work plan and RETT income & expenditures to decide if restructuring the RETT fund or additional borrowing is desirable to meet the objectives of this plan.

Begin Implementation of LOA Process

The Land Ownership Adjustment Process (LOA) has been, and will continue to be, a cooperative project between the Town of Vail, the U.S. Forest Service, and Eagle County. The goals and objectives of this

process are described in detail in Appendix 1. Through development of this plan, several of the identified LOA parcels/ actions have received a high priority because they help meet needs identified through the priority analysis process . These are priorities for both the Town of Vail and the USFS.

Town of Vail high priority LOA parcels (lands identified during the LOA process) include:

- Parcel 1 - Trappers Run, Lots 16, 19, 21
- Parcel 2 - Unplated Parcel N of Vail Ridge
- Parcel 15 - Parcel A
- Parcel 27 - Parcel C
- Parcel 51 - Parcel H

The Town of Vail is interested in acquiring parcels 51, 15 (portion) from the U.S. Forest Service and conveying parcels 2 and 1 (portion) to the U.S. Forest Service. TOV and adjacent owners are interested in acquiring the northwest portion of 27 and and deannexing the southwest portion

The next level of priorities should be to work with public entities on the issue of resolving the Water and Sanitation District or other PUBLIC facilities on National Forest System land within the Town. These parcels include:

- Parcel 33 - Parcel F
- Parcel 28 - Parcel E

In both of these cases, the transaction involves conveyance of a portion of the National Forest System owned parcel to the Town and the deannexation of the remainder (which will remain in the National Forest System). The remaining LOA parcels are considered a low priority but should be looked at first in the context of balancing land values during the trade of the High and Medium priority parcels.

The Town of Vail and the U.S. Forest Service should pursue land trades on the identified parcels. The first step in this process is to initiate separate land value appraisals for these properties. Appraisals should be sought for as many parcels as needed to acquire the high (and possibly the medium) priority parcels in order to balance the trade values. Of the high and medium priority parcels, these include Parcels 51, 28, and 27, and 27a .

Design Trails and Seek Funding

The design of the first phase of the new South Trail needs to be completed in order to determine financial requirements and to begin fund raising. Funding for the trail will be facilitated by a clear definition of the trail system and understanding of its feasibility as well as benefit to the Town. Funding can be sought through the State Trails program, GOCO funds and through local support. The GOCO funds will begin to be dispersed later this year and it appears that those communities which have done initial planning and gathered community support will be in a more favorable position to compete successfully for these funds. The Town should also continue to look for opportunities to improve regional trail connections.

Comprehensive Sign Program

With the addition of a number of trails and trailheads, and the improvement of existing trailheads, it will be more critical to implement a comprehensive sign program that is coordinated between the Town of Vail, the U.S. Forest Service, and Vail Associates. A sign program is currently in the process of being implemented in the Town but it has not yet been tied to the other trail systems that will, in the future, better connect to the "in-town" trails. The core area "trailheads" will serve as information "kiosks" that will let the user know exactly how and where to access the trail system.

West Meadow Drive

Plans currently exist to improve West Meadow Drive with improved pedestrian and cycling paths and landscaping. At the November 9, 1993 Town Council Meeting, Council directed staff to move ahead with implementation of the West Meadow Drive plan as an alternative to the streamwalk between Lionshead and the Chapel Bridge.

Institute Neighborhood Planning Process

In response to the needs identified for both East and West Vail, this plan recommends that neighborhood planning processes be initiated for East and West Vail to more fully understand the needs and deficiencies of these areas in regard to parks and recreational facilities. These needs may relate to new parks, types of park uses appropriate to the neighborhood, or to reprogramming existing parks to better meet the needs of residents and visitors. These meetings can also be used to identify undeveloped lots in a neighborhood that the neighborhood may wish to protect.



Structure Use of RETT Funds

The Town needs to make some basic determinations as to how it will utilize the RETT funds for acquisition of priority parcels. If it continues the current pay as you go approach it has limited ability, compared with other approaches which may entail some borrowing. Currently, approximately \$1.5 million is committed to existing debt service and obligations. Revenues which are received above this level could be committed to the acquisition program.

TOV acts as Vehicle for Neighborhood Scale Protection of Land

On parcels of land that a neighborhood is interested in protecting, but are not part of the open space system or do not have community-wide significance, the Town of Vail can act as a facilitator to assist in protecting these lands. This role could range from acting as the buyer (with participation from the neighborhood), to enabling the neighborhood to take advantage of tax benefits, to accepting these lands so the Town has management responsibilities. The Town could play a variety of roles in financing acquisition of lands ranging from negotiation, to providing matching funds or providing partial funding to assist in the protection of these lands. It is recommended that a portion of the RETT be designated for protection of neighborhood open space. It is recommended that a portion of the \$800,000 RETT contingency fund be used for this purpose.

Complete Zoning Changes

A critical element to open lands protection will be completing the proposed zoning changes for Greenbelt Natural Open Space and the Agricultural Open Space Districts. After these text changes are completed, Staff should recommend zoning changes to specific parcels to ensure that zoning is consistent with the Open Lands Plan, Land Use Plan, and the current land use on and adjacent to parcels.

Private Improvements to Public Land

On November 9, 1993 the Town Council instructed Town staff to identify areas where unauthorized improvements on public lands have occurred particularly on public stream tract areas. This action will take considerable staff time and should be identified in the Community

Development or Public Works work plan. In addition, it is recommended that staff develop recommendations for private property owners to decrease impacts to sensitive natural areas, such as Gore Creek, e.g. maintaining native vegetation along Gore Creek and its tributaries.

Permanent Protection of Lands Acquired for Vail Open Lands System

One of the concerns frequently expressed at the public meetings was the need to ensure that once lands are acquired for open space, parks, and trails that they be protected from conversion to other uses in the future. This desire to ensure the permanence of protection for these lands can be met in several ways. The two potential models are first, the requirement of a public vote for any change in use of these lands and second, the use of a land trust (holding an easement on these properties) as an insurance policy. The Town should move quickly to first develop an ordinance requiring a public vote to change the use or zoning of open space and then explore the viability of a land trust.

a. Public Vote to Change Use

One of the most common ways that lands acquired with public funds for parks and open space purposes can be protected from conversion to other uses is to require a public referendum for any change of use. Usually this requires a charter amendment, as is the case in Boulder and Denver. The charters of both of these cities require a vote of the people to convert open space and park land to other uses. This prevents future city councils or departments from taking actions to change uses without first obtaining permission from a majority of the electorate. This has never happened with land in Boulder and is extremely rare in Denver (the proposed sale of Winter Park by the City of Denver, for example, falls under this provision). This approach has worked extremely well in jurisdictions where it is utilized and allows future town councils limited ability to change uses. The Town should evaluate different protection techniques that have been used (e.g. Boulder and Denver) and determine what is appropriate for the Town of Vail.

b. Establishment of a Land Trust

A second option is the use of an independent land trust which would hold easements on each of the parcels acquired for either open space or parks. The choice of this option is motivated by a desire to use conservation easements on these lands to permanently protect them from changing uses or being developed. This approach is more complicated than the first option and, while it offers the prospect of permanent protection, has a number of hurdles to overcome before this level of protection is achieved.

A land trust is a nonprofit, public purpose organization which is dedicated to conserving open space lands. Land trusts range from large organizations such as the Nature Conservancy, Trust for Public Lands and Colorado Open Lands to small, locally oriented and volunteer organizations such as the Clear Creek Conservancy, Eagle County Land Trust, and Mesa County Land Trust. There are 26 land trusts operating in Colorado, most of them small and locally oriented.

The primary vehicle utilized by land trusts to protect open lands is the conservation easement. The conservation easement permanently protects a property from development and may specify various management practices which must be employed to ensure the protection of conservation values. Generally, a conservation easement is voluntarily given by a landowner to a land trust or governmental entity. An easement is a legally enforceable restriction on property which is recorded with the property deed. Many landowners prefer to give easements to land trusts as opposed to governmental entities because they fear that governmental policy and commitment to conservation may change over time.

The landowner has complete use and management of a property with a conservation easement on it. The land trust's responsibility is to monitor the use of the property to ensure that the terms of the easement are not violated. If they are violated, the land trust has the responsibility of notifying the owner of the violation and seeking compliance with

the terms of the easement. If the owner fails to remedy the situation, the land trust must bring an enforcement action against the owner in county court to correct the violation (i.e. building in an easement area). The responsibility of the land trust to monitor and enforce the terms of the easement is perpetual. As a result, the land trust must be a capably run and viable entity for the long term.

The placement of perpetual conservation easements on the Town owned open space and park lands could create an insurance policy that they would never be developed or used in inappropriate ways. However, there are a number of practical hurdles which must be overcome before this technique is viable. First, the Town must either work with an existing land trust or help create a new land trust in Vail or Eagle County. Several existing land trusts such as the Trust for Public Land or the Eagle County Land Trust might be willing to perform this service for the Town. In order to monitor and enforce easements, most land trusts ask landowners for payment of an endowment to cover anticipated costs. This is generally a one time payment which is placed in a stewardship fund used for monitoring and enforcement.

The establishment of a local land trust in Vail has been discussed for several years in order to encourage voluntary conservation of remaining open space lands. Land trusts are generally supported by local contributions and are active in a number of ski towns such as Jackson Hole, Crested Butte, Telluride, and Steamboat. In Crested Butte, the land trust receives support from the Town of Crested Butte's real estate transfer tax. Under Colorado law, a land trust must be in existence for at least two years before it can accept easements.

The land trust option could work well if the Town and the community are committed to ensuring the long term viability of the land trust. Since Vail is almost ninety percent built out, there may be limited conservation

potential beyond the next ten years. Therefore, the land trust might have a larger geographical focus than just the Town of Vail. There is an Eagle County Land Trust, for instance, but it has not been very active in concluding conservation transactions. If the land trust option is to be pursued, the opportunities for collaboration with a larger or national land trust should be explored as an alternative to a purely local land trust. There might be some interesting local/national hybrid land trust alternatives which might be possible.

The land trust option can provide an independent insurance policy to keep the open space and park lands undeveloped. However, there are a number of issues related to establishing the land trust, affiliating with a national land trust, ensuring the viability of the land trust, and defining the interaction between the land trust and the Town which must be addressed before the Town can move with assurance in this direction.

CONCLUSION

This report presents an action plan designed to implement the public's desires for protecting environmentally sensitive lands, improving and expanding the Vail Valley's trail system, and improving recreational opportunities.

The Action Plan spells out in detail a six year plan that will achieve the highest priorities of the Comprehensive Open Lands Plan. In addition, recommendations are made to improve management of TOV lands and to better integrate these lands into an open lands system. The action plan is intended to be flexible enough to take advantage of land opportunities as they arise. This plan provides a detailed framework for creating a system of open lands and interconnecting trails which will help maintain the open character of Vail.

LAND OWNERSHIP AND ADJUSTMENT PROCESS

The White River National Forest is in the process of preparing a Land Ownership Adjustment Analysis (LOA) for incorporation into the Forest Plan as an amendment. This analysis will serve as a strategic guide to manage land ownership of the forest and will "classify" the forest with regard to disposal and acquisition objectives. This plan has been fully integrated into the Comprehensive Open Lands Plan.

The Vail Land Ownership Adjustment Task Force, made up of representatives for the Town of Vail (TOV), U.S. Forest Service (USFS) and Eagle County has been established for the purpose of cooperatively developing a "desired" ownership pattern and a common Town of Vail / NFS boundary. Other goals of the task force include, but are not limited to, resolving unpermitted encroachments and improvements on National Forest lands, maintaining and improving public access to National Forest lands and jointly planning and integrating Town of Vail and National Forest recreation opportunities.

Over the past two years, the LOA Task Force has reviewed a number of lots and parcels throughout the Town to determine their appropriateness for inclusion into the Land Ownership Adjustment plan. Review criteria included parcel location, Town of Vail zoning designation, geologic/floodplain hazard status, parcel acreage and other pertinent information. A LOA "code" has been assigned to each parcel which indicates the Task Force's recommended action for the property (i.e. USFS conveyance to the TOV, TOV to consider purchase, etc.).

The task force has described the "Desired Future Condition" highlighting recommended results to achieve within the next 10 years.

- A. That there be no National Forest System lands within the municipal limits of the Town of Vail.
- B. That the U.S. Forest Service survey, identify, and maintain the common boundary of the Town of Vail and the U.S. Forest Service and that both agencies share in the enforcement of regulations pertaining to the boundary. The boundary has been simplified where possible, irregularities have been reduced or eliminated.
- C. That all land exchanges and purchases optimize both local and national public benefit. Conflicts with local interests are recognized in the decision making process of all land exchanges and purchases, and all efforts are made to address and minimize those conflicts.
- D. That all lands acquired by the Town of Vail are used for public purposes such as open space, public housing, recreation or for the resolution of unauthorized uses.
- E. That the Town of Vail, Eagle County, or the U.S. Forest Service acquire all privately owned tracts, parcels and previously unplatted lands adjacent to, and outside of, the common Town of Vail and National Forest System boundary. These lands are transferred to the National Forest System, Eagle County, or the Town of Vail where joint objectives are satisfied.
- F. That public access to National Forest System lands be maintained or improved. New access points meet Town of Vail and U.S. Forest Service objectives.
- G. That National Forest System lands within the study area that are encumbered with abandoned uses, unauthorized uses, or infrastructure related facilities are reduced or eliminated.
- H. That the Town of Vail and National Forest recreation opportunities are jointly planned and integrated.
- I. That all unincorporated, platted residential areas within the study area are annexed within the municipal limits of the Town of Vail.
- J. That the wood fiber production emphasis management area (7E) that is adjacent to the Town of Vail as identified in the Forest Land and Resource Management Plan be replaced by a recreation emphasis prescription.
- K. That new developments are discouraged on private lands that exist outside and adjacent to the Town of Vail.

The next step in the LOA process is formal adoption of the LOA plan by both the Forest Service, in the form of an amendment to the Forest Plan, and the Town of Vail, as part of this Comprehensive Open Lands Plan. Once the plan has been adopted, the TOV and USFS will proceed with transfer and/or acquisition of lands and adjustment of the TOV/USFS boundary line according to a preestablished priority list.